The Last Stone is Just the Beginning: A Rhetorical Biography of Washington National Cathedral

Teresa F. Morales
Georgia State University

Follow this and additional works at: http://scholarworks.gsu.edu/communication_diss

Recommended Citation
http://scholarworks.gsu.edu/communication_diss/42

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by the Department of Communication at ScholarWorks @ Georgia State University. It has been accepted for inclusion in Communication Dissertations by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks @ Georgia State University. For more information, please contact scholarworks@gsu.edu.
THE LAST STONE IS JUST THE BEGINNING:
A RHETORICAL BIOGRAPHY OF WASHINGTON NATIONAL CATHEDRAL

by

TERESA FEDERICO MORALES

Under the Direction of James F. Darsey

ABSTRACT

Washington National Cathedral sits atop Mt. St. Alban’s hill in Washington, D.C. declaring itself the nation’s cathedral and spiritual home for the nation. The idea of a national church serving national purposes was first envisioned by L’Enfant in the District’s original plan. Left aside in the times of nation building, the idea of a national church slumbered until 1893 when a group of Episcopalians petitioned and received a Congressional charter to begin a church and school in Washington, D.C. The first bishop of Washington, Henry Y. Satterlee, began his bishopric with the understanding that this cathedral being built by the Protestant Episcopal Church Foundation was to be a house of prayer for all people. Using Jasinski’s constructivist orienta-
tion to reveal the one hundred year rhetorical history defining what constitutes a “national cathedral” within the narrative paradigm first established by Walter Fisher, this work utilizes a rhetorical biographical approach to uncover the various discourses of those speaking of and about the Cathedral. This biographical approach claims that Washington National Cathedral possesses an ethos that differentiates the national cathedral from the Cathedral of St. Peter and St. Paul even though the two names refer to the same building. The WNC ethos is one that allows a constant “becoming” of a national cathedral, and this ability to “become” allows for a rhetorical voice of the entity we call Washington National Cathedral. Four loci of rhetorical construction weave through this dissertation in the guiding question of how the Cathedral rhetorically created and how it sustains itself as Washington National Cathedral: rhetoric about the Cathedral, the Cathedral as rhetoric, the Cathedral as context, and Cathedral Dean Francis Sayre, Jr. as synecdoche with the Cathedral. This dissertation is divided into eight rhetorical moments of change that take the idea of a national church from L’Enfant’s 1791 plan of the City through the January 2013 announcement allowing same-sex weddings at the Cathedral and Obama’s second inaugural prayer service. The result of this rhetorical exploration is a more nuanced understanding of the place and how it functions in an otherwise secular society for which there is no precedent for the establishment of a national cathedral completely separated from the national government. The narrative strains that wind through Cathedral discourse create a braid of text, context, and moral imperative that ultimately allows for the unique construction of Washington National Cathedral, a construction of what defines “national” created entirely by the Cathedral.
INDEX WORDS: Washington National Cathedral, Narrative paradigm, Contextual construction, Henry Y. Satterlee, Francis B. Sayre, Jr., Rhetorical history, Rhetorical biography, State funerals, Inaugural prayer service, House of prayer for all people, Spiritual home of the nation, Generous-spirited Christianity, The Episcopal Church, America’s Westminster Abbey
THE LAST STONE IS JUST THE BEGINNING:
A RHETORICAL BIOGRAPHY OF WASHINGTON NATIONAL CATHEDRAL

by

TERESA FEDERICO MORALES

A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
in the College of Arts and Sciences
Georgia State University
2013
THE LAST STONE IS JUST THE BEGINNING:
A RHETORICAL BIOGRAPHY OF WASHINGTON NATIONAL CATHEDRAL

by

TERESA FEDERICO MORALES

Committee Chair: James F. Darsey
Committee: Isaac A. Weiner
Nathan S. Atkinson
Elizabeth Burmester
Martin J. Medhurst

Electronic Version Approved:

Office of Graduate Studies
College of Arts and Sciences
Georgia State University
May 2013
DEDICATION

As a work of love, I dedicate the writing of this dissertation to Washington National Cathedral and my husband, Frank Morales, Ph.D.

If one had been to the 1907 Foundation Stone ceremony, one would have seen the inscription carved into the Jerusalem stone that lies embedded in the Indiana limestone: Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. I find this prayer speaks to the Cathedral’s true purpose in the nation’s capital; it is a purpose the Cathedral has always understood, believed, and followed.

There is no way any of this work could have been done, much less actually completed, without the absolute love, trust, and care of my husband. The loneliness of dissertation writing was always lightened by the love in this man’s voice and in his eyes. He believes in me.

PATER noster, qui es in caelis, sanctificetur nomen tuum. Adveniat regnum tuum. Fiat voluntas tua, sicut in caelo et in terra.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I want to express my sincere thanks to the many individuals who gave of their time, talent, and energies to make this study possible. First, I must bow to my incredible adviser, Dr. James Darsey, who calmly led me to the Cathedral as a dissertation topic and then led me through the writing of this magnificent place. Time is different for Dr. Darsey, and although he frustrates many time-sensitive graduate students with his Martian conception, his patience with time has always led to better work. Perhaps this is his way of following Horace’s word of advice that once the writing has been done, let it sit before sending it out into the world. Horace advised that wait be nine years; thank goodness Dr. Darsey does not. It is wise to remember Horace, though, and his admonition that “you can always destroy what you have not published, but once you have let your words go, they cannot be taken back.” I am mindful of this and I absolutely trust Dr. Darsey’s word that this dissertation is now ready to brought to the public.

I thank also the other members of my dissertation committee for not only taking the time to read the work but also for patiently waiting to receive it: Dr. Isaac Weiner (Religious Studies Department at GSU), Dr. Nathan Atkinson (Communication Studies at GSU), Dr. Elizabeth Burmester, (English Department at GSU), and Dr. Martin Medhurst (Communication at Baylor University). I wish to also thank our department chair, Dr. David Cheshier, who keeps his email address available to graduate students going through the dissertation process.

There was no way to complete a work of this nature without the help of those who have the great fortune of working at WNC. Diane Ney, Cathedral archivist, is here acknowledged as
simply amazing in her knowledge of what the Cathedral archives hold. Diane’s help kept my trips to D.C. brief and inexpensive, and for that I am truly grateful. Her staff of archive volun-
eteers must also be acknowledged here, especially David, who knew the Sayre files so well even though they have not yet been archivally classified. I thank my discussions with Cathedral vic-
ars, Steve Huber and Jane Cope. The Rev. Huber spent almost two hours with me in the au-
tumn of 2009, giving me a personalized and extensive tour. He hooked me in. The Rev. Cannon Cope spent a gracious hour with me in February 2013 and gave her blessing for this work. Addi-
tionally, the final product benefitted from the timely advice offered by Mr. Richard Weinberg, WNC Director of Communications. My ability to finish resided with Rev. Cope’s blessing and Mr. Weinberg’s invaluable input.

A dissertation that relies on out-of-town travel, with airplane fares, hotel stays, trans-
portation, and food is an expensive adventure and one that, no doubt, slows and sometimes stops many. I have the gracious good fortune to have a gracious good sister and brother-in-law, Mary and Mike, living in Alexandria, VA, who more than once paid my airfare, lent me their car, always let me stay at their home, and fed me really well. Their adoption of my sweet niece, Katherine, gave me added reason to continually return to D.C. (ostensibly to research, of course). I am humbly thankful for their continuous love and support.

Finally, I wish to acknowledge here my family. When my husband and I decided that this adventure sounded like a good idea, it was especially meant to bring pride to my parents, Delma Barron and Joe and Barbara Federico. They think I am brilliant and, if I am, it is only be-
cause I come from such great genetic stock. My siblings, Linda, Tony, and Mary, all provided the necessary love and support that helped me on my journey. Linda single-handedly cared for
our mother so that I could selfishly pursue my dream. Tony selflessly housed me and my husband all summer and each Christmas break as I made return treks back to Texas during my breaks. My brother Joey, may he rest in peace, sadly did not live to see me enter graduate school; but my sojourn here happened with his eternal love tucked inside my heart—manifested by his lovely daughter, Karley, whom we found soon after her 18th birthday during the second year of my doctoral program. I thank my two daughters, the definers of my life, Beth and Amy. Beth spent HOURS talking to me on the phone, helping me work out the theological premises of my graduate work. Amy released me from having to talk about any of my graduate work. The balance they provided kept me sane. They also, perhaps more importantly, gave me four grandchildren between them—Anndria, Samuel, Zachary, and Derek. My two stepsons and their wives gave me two more—Elijah and Olivia. Going in with one grandchild and coming out with six has made this work an imperative; I see that I am a role model and it is important that they have their two grandparents as educational achievements to which they should also aspire. I finally, finally, want to express my gratitude for the friends I have made here in Atlanta. Knowing I was here but temporarily and yet still willing to expend great love and kindness shows just how wonderful the people of this place are. I love you all.
TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS ........................................................................................................................................... v

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION ................................................................................................................................. 1

  1.1 The Cathedral Church of SS. Peter and Paul, Washington, D.C. ............................................................... 1
  1.2 Rhetorical Biography .................................................................................................................................. 11
  1.3 Chapter Overview ...................................................................................................................................... 28
  1.4 Minor Details ............................................................................................................................................. 32

CHAPTER 2: CONCEPTION ......................................................................................................................................... 33

  2.1 Pierre L’Enfant and the new Federal City ................................................................................................. 33
  2.2 The Idea Carries Forward One Hundred Years .................................................................................... 36
  2.3 The National Cathedral Foundation Charter of 1893 .......................................................................... 39

CHAPTER 3: INCEPTION—SATTERLEE’S IDEOLOGY .......................................................................................... 48

  3.1 Where Matters: The Fight for St. Alban’s Hill ......................................................................................... 56
  3.2 The Idea Matters: The Peace Cross Dedication .................................................................................... 59
  3.3 Why Matters: Satterlee’s Fundraising Efforts ......................................................................................... 62
  3.4 What Kind Matters: Gothic Style, Medieval Architecture .................................................................. 78
  3.5 Begun Matters: Laying the Foundation Stone ......................................................................................... 82

CHAPTER 4: THE FOUNDATION OF ALL PROGRESS, ALL GOVERNMENT, AND ALL CIVILIZATION—1908 TO WWII ........................................................................................................................................... 89
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>Washington Cathedral/National Cathedral/American Cathedral</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>Gesamthunstwerk—The Washington and Lincoln Bays</td>
<td>105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER 5: THE CATHEDRAL DURING WWII</td>
<td>Land of the Free and Home of the Brave</td>
<td>118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>Land of the Free: Tourism at the New Jerusalem Cathedral</td>
<td>118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>Home of the Brave: Tours for the American Soldier</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>From a National Foundation to a Christian Unity Foundation</td>
<td>134</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>National Prayer Services: America’s Westminster Abbey</td>
<td>143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER 6: DEAN FRANCIS SAYRE AND SOCIAL ACTIVISM</td>
<td>Giving Thanks and Praise Through Action</td>
<td>164</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>Cathedral Dean, Francis B. Sayre’s Activism</td>
<td>164</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.1 Instance 1:</td>
<td>Against Joe McCarthy</td>
<td>167</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.2 Instance 2:</td>
<td>Civil Rights and the March on Selma</td>
<td>174</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.3 Instance 3:</td>
<td>Against Vietnam, “A Walk of Conscience”</td>
<td>188</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.4 Instance 4:</td>
<td>The Palestinian Refugees in the Holy Land</td>
<td>193</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER 7: THE LAST STONE IS JUST THE BEGINNING</td>
<td>The Completion of America’s “Westminster Abbey”</td>
<td>201</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>The Last Stone</td>
<td>201</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>The Assumption of WNC</td>
<td>214</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix K: Military Triptych ........................................................................................................ 322

Appendix L: Invasion Day Message by The Right Reverend Angus Dun, Bishop of
Washington .................................................................................................................................. 323

Appendix M.1: The War Memorial Chapel.................................................................................... 324

Appendix M.2: The Pentagon Cross.............................................................................................. 325

Appendix N: British connection at the dedication ceremony of the War Memorial
Chapel in 1946. ............................................................................................................................ 326

Appendix O: Dean Hall’s letter announcing same-sex weddings at WNC............................. 327

Appendix P: A Call to Compassion Concert for Hope on 9/11/11 at Kennedy Center 330

Appendix Q: Fallen angel at Concert for Hope ........................................................................... 331

Appendix R: 2012 Cathedral Age cover ......................................................................................... 332
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

The Cathedral Church of SS. Peter and Paul, Washington, D.C.

"The Cathedral of Washington will stand on the brow of the hill as a ceaseless object lesson for God. In contrast to Athens, where, in the very centre of Greek civilisation, there stood an altar erected ‘to an Unknown God,’ we need, in the capital of a country which marches at the forefront of modern civilisation, not an altar of Agnosticism but a witness for Him...”

~Henry Yates Satterlee

On Friday, January 6, 1893, on the Feast Day of the Epiphany, twelve days after Christmas, by Act of Congress and signed by President Benjamin Harrison, a charter created the Protestant Episcopal Cathedral Foundation and, *ipso facto*, the Cathedral Church of St. Peter and St. Paul of Washington, D.C.—aka Washington National Cathedral (WNC).¹ The continual association of the government and its leaders with the cathedral has benefitted the reputation of its role in American lore. As the symbolic religious helm representing the nation, National Cathedral has welcomed every president since Theodore Roosevelt witnessed the foundation stone in 1907 (Snodgrass, 2000). Funeral services have been held in the Cathedral for Presidents Eisenhower, Reagan, and Ford and Woodrow Wilson is buried there (Washington National Cathedral, 2009). In addition to presidential comings and goings, memorial and prayer services have been given for the victims of the 1998 embassy bombings in Tanzania and Kenya, as

---

¹ This is not the only church charter Congress ever granted. See footnote 99. A congressional charter is the equivalent of incorporation at the federal level. A bill to grant a charter is introduced in Congress and must be voted into law. There have been questions about the federal government’s power to manage corporations who have received a charter. Because of questions on who is responsible for the activities of these entities, the issuance of charters was officially stopped in 1992, though some exceptions have been made. The granting of a charter does not include congressional oversight.
well as for the victims of the 2001 terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center, the Pentagon, and on United Airlines Flight 93, as well as many other prayer services for national causes (Washington National Cathedral, 2009; Mueller, 2008). The Cathedral has hosted several celebrities including Dr. Martin Luther King, who preached his final sermon from the Cathedral, Queen Elizabeth II, Charles de Gaulle, Indira Gandhi, and Desmond Tutu.

The Cathedral was built with the intention of being a symbol of the nation’s religious heritage of Protestantism (Washington National Cathedral, 2009c; Mueller, 2008) and has done well as part of the national mythos as demonstrated by its inclusion in various articles, books, popular cultural artifacts such as films and novels, and websites of the federal city, nation and world. Began in 1893 as a project of the Protestant Episcopal Church, WNC now claims an identity affirmed by the recently resigned dean, Samuel Lloyd III, as “the spiritual home for the nation (Washington National Cathedral, 2011, p. 2) with “nation emphasizing that we seek to serve the entire country in all its variety, including its vast potpourri of faiths” (p. 10, italics in original). That one hundred year association as a rhetorical strategy in becoming national is this project’s purpose.

The Cathedral Church of Saint Peter and Saint Paul is, first and foremost, a church and an episcopal seat of the Episcopal faith even as it claims to be a national house of prayer for all people and, by extension to our national diversity and plurality of religions, for all faiths. Stressing the ever important aspect of the national, WNC is presented as “a spiritual resource for our nation: a great and beautiful edifice in the city of Washington, an indispensable ministry for people of all faiths and perspectives, and a sacred place for our country in times of celebration, crisis, and sorrow” (Washington National Cathedral, 2012 [Italics added]). Exploring the rhetor-
ical chassé from national Episcopal Cathedral to National Cathedral is more than a historical journey down memory lane. The rhetorical construction of Washington National Cathedral as the nation’s church includes discourses about the Cathedral by myriad players in the Cathedral’s genesis, fundraising, blessings, and dedications, as well as certain public discourses by various Presidents, their uses of the Cathedral, and the Cathedral’s choices involved in those uses. Additionally, the Cathedral, through purposeful outreach, has carefully crafted its image through its own journal and its modern Website.

Construction of the cathedral was completed in 1990, and it is tempting to see the completed whole, believing that it has been there all along, so many years, as a heavenly beacon looking out over our federal city. Ultimately built to last until the end of time, twenty-two years of completed existence is not very much time at all in the life of a cathedral. But WNC began its rhetorical claim on the nation long before ground was broken to lay the foundation stone. As soon as Pierre L’Enfant placed a “church for national purposes” on the original Federal City blueprint, the seed for a national church was planted in the breast of at least one Episcopalian priest, and that seed has proven fertile.

Building a nation from scratch involves the practicalities and intricacies of government and law; but the idea of nationalism in the hearts and minds of the people so governed requires rhetorical appeal and this applies to the Cathedral as well. Building a cathedral, as a matter of a physical building, is a huge undertaking. However, the national cathedral its founders had in mind could hardly be supported only by those Episcopalians living within the District of Columbia under the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of the diocese of Washington. The first bishop of Washington, Henry Yates Satterlee, understood that anything “national” is a tremendous undertak-
ing. Wrapped firmly in the shawl of a “free church,” Bishop Satterlee assumed the helm of cathedral leadership, even as he kept that shawl fringed in the language of nationalism. Satterlee felt keenly that church and state ought to be kept strictly separated, while at the same time understood that the responsibilities and duties of each necessarily overlap at times. That WNC could fulfill certain national needs that the government could not was a matter of great pride. Those “needs” are the roots of Satterlee’s rhetorical claims for building a national cathedral—not as a church, as in a state religion, but as an entity that provides a national sense of spiritual identity. This nation created new roles for the governance of a people, and one of those new roles was the transformation of the function of the church. Not part of the government, but part of the fabric of American culture, WNC chose to be a place for the spiritual needs of the nation.

Christopher Rowe, architectural historian writing his dissertation on the early architects of WNC, skillfully advances the idea that no cathedral is built outside of the economic and political world since the building of a cathedral is no small project for any society to undertake (Rowe, 1999). Basing his premise on the 1929 Cathedral publication *Eminent Opinion Regarding the Cathedral at Washington: Thirty Representative Americans State Their Views*, Rowe reveals how the cathedral relies on the voices of prominent, politically powerful, and wealthy contributors rather than religious voices. There is no inherent fault in doing so, of course, for cathedrals are expensive and require long-term financial investments, but it does speak to the practicality involved in creating a national icon even when that icon is enmeshed in theological,
rather than economic or political, importance. By adding those secular voices in its support,\(^2\) WNC has been able to advance its cause as a national cathedral despite its implicit role as an Episcopal church. In this sense, surely there has not been a strict separation of church and state, not when many of those voices came from government representatives. Indeed, WNC has continuously nurtured the valuable relationship between itself and the White House.

Perhaps it has been serendipity that has seen so many of our Presidents as friendly to the Episcopal cause, or perhaps, as a people, Americans find the moderate Protestant Episcopalian preferable to elect. At any rate, consciously or subconsciously, the governors of the nation in the last quarter century have seen fit to use WNC for those essentially spiritual moments of national ritual and crises. For a nation believing in the power of prayer, WNC has tried to be the strategic center bringing the people’s national petitions to God.

Even though Bishop Satterlee, in his justification of a national cathedral, insisted that absolutely no governmental financial support would ever be considered in the building of the Cathedral, he diligently worked to make sure of a personal connection by inviting President McKinley to witness the Peace Cross dedication and President Theodore Roosevelt to dedicate the foundation cornerstone in 1907 (Hewlett, 2007; Brent C. H., 1916). Succeeding bishops and deans have carried on Satterlee’s legacy of White House relationships. Eighty-three years after Roosevelt’s participation, President George H. W. Bush oversaw the last Cathedral stone, a rose finial on the St. Paul tower, laid in place. Campbell and Jamieson (2008) did not include a chapter on how the presidents rhetorically construct the relationship between church and state.

\(^2\) This is shown in other WNC publications with addresses by Presidents as well as General Pershing’s video (talking picture) supporting WNC. As already mentioned, *Eminent Opinion*, contained brief addresses by Presidents McKinley (1899), T. Roosevelt (1907), Taft (1927), Wilson (1923), Coolidge (1923), Hoover (1929), and (then Governor of New York) F.D. Roosevelt (1929). In addition to Pershing’s short film, the National Committee for Washington Cathedral published a pamphlet of an address by Pershing titled, “The Cathedral and the Challenge of 1932.”
in their book, and they did not venture to explore how each president after Harrison participated in the making of a national spiritual home. Yet, quite obviously, each president did. That action is not seen as defining the presidency, but it is seen as defining WNC.

The Cathedral purportedly is named “national” because “it was built as a spiritual home for the nation...it is a ‘house of prayer for all people,’ a calling that transcends national boundaries” (Washington National Cathedral, 2007, p. 6). Even so, this cathedral, just as all others, is a house of worship dedicated to the continuity of a Christian faith. On the other hand, the Cathedral tellingly questions its own role by asking, “if this Cathedral seeks to be a church for the nation, to what degree its worship should be more American and less English, more ecumenical and less Episcopal, more interfaith and less distinctively Christian?” (Washington National Cathedral, 2007, p. 7). If WNC seeks to be a church for the nation, the implication that it is not yet is curious because WNC acts as a national church and claims it is our national church.3

The existence of WNC in the nation’s capital is not as radical or as ordinary as many may suspect. Historically, capital cities that house government entities are built to represent a concentration of power, both secular and celestial (Williams, 1997). The District’s Mall can also be read as a tribute to American civil religion with the appropriate monuments to Presidents Washington, Jefferson, Madison, and Lincoln, and the holy grounds of civil law and those civil martyrs who gave their lives for the ultimate causes of the United States. Still, all capital cities,

---

3 [https://www.facebook.com/WNCathedral](https://www.facebook.com/WNCathedral), Post for Nov. 20, 2012 Thanksgiving: “’Go your way, eat the fat and drink sweet wine and send portions of them to those for whom nothing is prepared, for this day is holy to our Lord; and do not be grieved, for the joy of the Lord is your strength.’ —Nehemiah 8:10

“As we consider the talents and gifts that have been shared so richly in our lives, may we remember the strength that comes from recognizing God’s great blessings during difficult times as well.

“From your National Cathedral, prayers and best wishes for a blessed and happy Thanksgiving.”
until most recently, have a place devoted to religious causes. Secularization and democratization of government for Western nations has displaced many temples for official religious use, but those temples still stand as a historical attest to a co-existing political/religious past. Bellah reminds us in *The Broken Covenant* that no new beginning starts from scratch (Bellah, 1975). Nations always start from somewhere, and the past is always brought along either as the example of how to be or as an example of how not to be. At the birth of the new United States, certain “fantasies, dreams, and nightmares long carried in the baggage of European tradition” made it easy in a mostly virgin land to believe the millenarian philosophy of our earliest European settlers (Bellah, 1975, p. 6). Yet, the Federal City was built to reflect a new world order, not of millennialism or a New Jerusalem, but of freedom and democracy, and to a certain extent, secularism. First, the seat of government and law forms the center, and then, from that center, the city radiates outward with occasional public squares as gathering places. As part of the national mall, Pierre L’Enfant, the city’s original architect, included a church for national purposes because he understood that governments require a place for public ritual, ceremony and oratory (Kite, 1970).

Washington National Cathedral is not a state monument built to house the remains of leaders and neither is it built for public ceremonies and oratories. WNC is a self-professed house of prayer, a Gothic cathedral, built with the hands and skill of masons without benefit of even one beam of steel. Yet, the agonistic strains of God and governor are felt throughout the Cathedral because although it is not a state monument, and is a house of prayer, the remains of certain glorious dead do reside there and many religious and political statements have been proclaimed from its pulpit and through ecclesiastic actions. Additionally, certain aspects of the
nation’s secular culture reside there in the stained glass windows, in gargoyles, in tapestries, and in statues. The communicative aspect of these architectural details remains untapped, however.

Architects spend an enormous energy in the aesthetic effects of their buildings and, more specifically for this cathedral, the architects carefully studied the theology of Satterlee’s vision and how that theology was to be communicated. The architects of WNC stayed in close communication with the bishops and deans of WNC as it was being built and their combined vision created more than a beautiful building. WNC is more than image; it is the “sound of footsteps, voices, and the street; it is the feel of the walls and floors; it is the smell of the previous inhabitants” (Jackson, 2006). The feel of a cathedral is aesthetically different from other buildings because cathedrals are made to aspire, as toward heaven, especially the Gothic cathedral (Feller & Fishwick, 1965). Made to both reflect and transcend the world, to bring the traveler into “God’s house,” WNC planners, most notably Satterlee, considered Gothic architecture as “the only legitimate style for a Christian Cathedral” (Feller & Fishwick, 1965, p. 15). The allure of this Gothic Cathedral, as it now stands, has definite rhetorical appeal in reflecting and influencing the “values, attitudes, beliefs, and actions” of a people (Stuart, 1973). In the end, however, it is Satterlee’s set of values, attitudes, and beliefs that have been rhetorically translated over WNC’s one hundred eighteen year genesis (from 1895 when Satterlee was ordained the first bishop of Washington to the completion of this project).

Rowe (1999) noted that previous books on the building of the Cathedral dealt with the “whos, whats, where, and whens” of WNC’s history, but did not explore the “whys of the Cathedral” (Rowe, 1999). Although Rowe did not set out to answer the question of “why,” he did
set up the architectural philosophy of the place. Still, architects focus on the aesthetics of the place, not the rhetorical function of the place. Bishop Satterlee made plain that he was building, first and foremost, “Christ’s House of Prayer and witness for Christ in the Capital of the United States,” but strictly within the limitations set by the separation of Church and State (Hewlet, 2007, p. 87). Not without a little bit of bias, architects Vaughan and Bodley, in agreement with Satterlee, expected that WNC, when complete, would be “as a city set on a hill,” an obvious reference to Winthrop’s famous sermon. Considering the purposeful use of the phrase “a city set on a hill” by Satterlee and WNC’s first architects, surely WNC is worthy of a rhetorical history of its ‘becoming’ as our national cathedral.

Although not a primary argument in this project, the traditional understanding of the First Amendment and Jefferson’s wall of separation metaphor ought to be addressed, if only briefly, to acknowledge the current tension residing in what is “national” about our cathedral. Thomas Tweed notes that throughout the twentieth century, but especially from 1893-1940, American religious groups built national versions of their respective churches in Washington, D.C. as they attempted to negotiate national religious and cultural power and identity as well as staking civic space in the nation’s capital (Tweed, 2011, p. 171). He quotes from a 1929 Washington Post editorial that found the fitness of religious denomination representation in Washington, D.C.

---

4 Satterlee to Bodley, 11 January 1907. WNC, ChA: j. 162, b.7, f.2.
5 Vaughan and Bodley to Cathedral Foundation, 1907. WNC ChA: j. 162, b 7, f. 2. Also, Satterlee to Bodley in response, same archive.
6 According to Tweed, there are ten churches in Washington, D.C. with the term “national” in their titles: National Baptist Memorial Church, National Community Church on Capitol Hill (Assemblies of God), Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, Ukrainian Catholic National Shrine of the Holy Family, National City Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), National Memorial Church of God, Washington National Cathedral, National Presbyterian Church, National Spiritual Science Center, and Universalist National Memorial Church. There are another three D.C. churches who explicitly call themselves national centers in their own literature or on their signs; there are five more that function as national denominational centers or at some time have claimed they were national; and at least two more that negotiate national status with the term “capital” in their title (Tweed, 2011, p. 305).
ington, D.C. was appropriate and that it seemed “the Nation has decreed it a thing altogether fitting and proper that in this Capital City should be erected magnificent temples to Divinity” (Littell, 1929; Tweed, 2011). There seemed to be no conflict in religion’s presence in Washington, D.C. The Supreme Court had not, at the turn of the last century when the Cathedral Foundation was fundraising for WNC, made many rulings based on the religion portion of the First Amendment, and the First Amendment clauses were understood to be instructions for Congress, but not for individual states (Alley, 1999; Howe, 1965). The Fourteenth Amendment, ratified in 1868, was incorporated to include the religion clauses on a national basis in the 1947 Everson case stating that the government must maintain neutrality toward religion, neither helping nor hindering any religious cause (Levy, 1986; Wilson & Drakeman, 1987; Alley, 1999). The separation rulings have had little to no effect on WNC mainly because it is not part of the national or a state government. This dissertation shows, however, that the Cathedral has always intended to serve as “a moral compass” for our nation’s leaders. As long as the Cathedral does not engage in political campaigning or lobbying, it retains its power to act upon issue advocacy (IRS, 2012). The “national” aspect of WNC resides in its own definition of what constitutes a national cathedral and is irrespective of the Cantwell (1940) and Everson (1947) cases. Suffice to say, WNC has not been a party in any major court cases testing the constitutionality of the Cathedral and the roles it has so far played in the national scene. That it has not been

---

7 For example, before the building of WNC, the Supreme Court had ruled on only two cases involving religion: Reynolds v. U.S., 98 U.S. 145 (1878) and Davis v. Beacon, 133 U.S. 333 (1890), both of which concerned Utah polygamy.

8 Although ratified and effective since 1791, the religion clauses of the First Amendment were not applied to states until 1940 with the Cantwell v. Connecticut Supreme Court decision that applied the 14th Amendment to the First. Justice Owen Roberts wrote, “The [14th] Amendment has rendered the legislatures of the states as incompetent as Congress to enact such laws.”

involved in the various separation cases is a curiosity, but the legality/constitutionality question is irrespective of how WNC has constructed itself as a “national cathedral.”

Rhetorical Biography

The Very Rev. Samuel Lloyd III, recent past dean of WNC, claims “we came to believe that because we are the nation’s church...certainly at critical moments of our life, we’re then granted an opportunity to be a big public voice—a public megaphone—for a thoughtful, generous, respectful Christian faith that has important things to say in the public conversations of the day” (Salmon, 2008). As a public megaphone giving relevance, audience, and opportunity for important national moral dialogue, this “national church” carries great responsibility, just as Bishop William Paret claimed in 1893. Most commonly, WNC has answered that responsibility by serving as a place for national prayer and remembrance as well as near constant inter-faith dialogue.

There is no precedent for a national cathedral in a nation such as ours, which most likely explains the absence of dialogue in early records of L’Enfant’s plans for a national church in the first Federal City plans. Even for the Cathedral’s early planners and clergy, how to go about being a moral “megaphone” is left the result of the exigencies of the time and place. As is discussed in Chapter 8, on the occasion of its centennial celebration, as the Cathedral staff discuss the next hundred years, there is a sense of wonderment about what it is, exactly, a national ca-

10 Dean Lloyd resigned in August 2011 and was replaced by the Very Rev. Gary Hall in September 2012.
11 Paret, Bishop of Maryland, pronounced at the 1893 General Convention of newly formed Washington dioceses, that he “must remember that in the city of Washington, God has given us national opportunities and national responsibilities...Powers of all kinds are centering there [and] the Church should be strongly represented there...Surely there are men who can love Christ’s Church as well as men love merely human institutions.” (Brent C. H., A master builder: Being the life and letters of Henry Yates Satterlee, First Bishop of Washington, 1916, pp. 169-170)
When a building is built, it is built with a defined purpose: this is a house for a family, this is an industrial building for manufacturing, this is a business building for offices, this is a bank. Even though these purposes can change, there is the sense that the building was built for something: a house can be converted into a law office, an industrial complex can be converted into a community college, a business building can be converted into a condominium complex. For each of these examples, the purpose changes and the building “converts;” it is made to reflect its new purpose. But a house doesn’t become more of a house, and a business building does not become more of a business building. The concepts of “house” and “business building” do not change. Washington National Cathedral is different and it is this difference that makes the place an enigma.

Aristotle tells us that there are three “species” of pisteis: ethos, logos, and pathos (Aristotle, 2004, pp. 38, 1356a). The means of proof for Aristotle could be found in the character of the rhetor, in the rhetor’s use of argument or logic, and in the rhetor’s appeal to emotion. Thus, the speaker uses ethos, logos, and pathos as tools of persuasion. The ethos of a speaker matters because persuasion also intimately includes an audience that needs to be persuaded of some such thing. Personal character, then, in matters of persuasion matters a great deal. Aristotle offered three (as always) means of persuasion using ethos: practical wisdom (phronesis), virtue (arête), and good will (eunoia); and failure in any of these lessens the persuasion of an argument (Aristotle, 2004, pp. 112, 1378a.5). A person possessing all three qualities is seen as a virtuous person and remains in good favor of the audience who is more willing to listen and be persuaded. In this way, a person who speaks appropriately to his or her moral state of vir-

---

12 George Kennedy interprets Aristotle’s use of the term pisteis to mean proof or logical proof.
tue creates a creditable ethos, or sense of character (Aristotle, 2004, pp. 210-211.7). In other words, the individual becomes what he or she does (Aristotle, Aristotle’s nicomachean ethics, 1984, pp. 21, 1103b). Aristotle always assumes the rhetor is human, although he never says so directly. This assumption, that rhetoric is the purview of the human, lasted until only recently. In writing about the Vietnam Veteran’s Memorial, Blair et al (1991) argued that public monuments are “rhetorical products” having the ability to “instruct” visitors about what is to be culturally valued (Blair, Jeppeson, & Pucci, 1991). Blair did not go so far as to claim that monuments, or the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, held the properties necessary to be a rhetor or a speaker nor was there an argument that the monument possessed the qualities of character. What is important for this project, however, is that the last part of the last century understood that persuasion does not belong solely to the human being; rather, persuasion is the product of human device. I can create not only words, but also things. Just as my words persuade, so do the things I create. It is this sense of the qualities of persuasion that WNC, as in all human creations, has the potential to “speak,” and therefore to persuade.

Early twentieth-century rhetorical criticism saw that understanding the rhetor was the key to understanding the rhetoric. Wichelns deplored the inappropriate emphasis some scholars placed on exploring the ethos of the rhetor to such great extent as to effectively reduce what was proclaimed as criticism to a matter of biography thus minimizing the critique of the rhetor’s discourse (Wichelns, 1925/2005). When the critic focuses too closely on biography as a means to understand a certain piece of rhetoric, there is the tendency to lose the focus of the effects of persuasion; and it is the effects of persuasion that Wichelns claims is the purpose of the rhetorical critic. The ensuing arguments and scholarly focus of rhetorical critics have moved
the focus away from effects, but there is still the understanding that at some level, for any rhetoric to be relevant there must be that element of persuasion as either successful or unsuccessful. Going circular, one way to determine the success of persuasion is to determine the character of the rhetor. Ciceronian thought values character as imperative for truthful persuasion. If focused on the elements of ethos, rather than the entire biographical background, the critic can limit the abuses Wichelns so worried about. In the case of WNC, although not a rhetor in the traditional sense, I claim the Cathedral has that element of ethos that includes the three virtues of phronesis, arête, and eunoia. Associating these qualities of character with the Cathedral, helps the rhetorical critic understand the Cathedral’s sense of authority as that spokesperson possessing “a big public voice—a public megaphone—for a thoughtful, generous, respectful Christian faith” that Rev. Lloyd claimed.

On one hand, WNC is a physical building, albeit not just a regular square or tall building. It is a Gothic cathedral, and as a Gothic cathedral, one might say it has “character.” There is something very different about a Gothic cathedral that a more modern building cannot claim. Cathedrals cannot be found on every street corner, nor even in every city. Even so, not every cathedral is particularly massive in size since the definition of a cathedral resides merely in the chair upon which a bishop sits. But this cathedral, is massive and quite honestly, magnificent to behold. When one walks up to WNC, before entering, there already is a feeling of personal insignificance and fascination. Walking in, the enveloping feel eliminates all connection with the outside world. One could say, of course, that many places, both secular and religious, offer this feel. But looking closer to what resides within WNC by taking the guided tour, being in the intimate company of the place, looking high up at the stained glass windows, looking forward to
the choir and high altar, going down into the crypts and chapels, hearing the stories that made the place, and hearing the echo of voices and the taps of shoes on the marble floor, elicits the feeling that this place is decidedly different; this place has, not just character, but a character. The name is more than a designation, it has a personality: Washington National Cathedral.

The Cathedral’s formal name is the Cathedral Church of St. Peter and St. Paul, but that name is rarely heard. The Cathedral’s nickname, Washington National Cathedral, or simply National Cathedral, offers a look into the personality of the place. For this place to have a personality, an ethos, a character, and to understand that WNC has been slowly growing not just physically but also in character, is to extend the generous possibility that WNC has what we call “a life.” Almost like the popular toy of a couple of decades ago, the transformers, WNC’s personality changes with the required services, the times, the needs of the nation, and the needs of people.

A biography is the story of a person’s life, or for WNC, a building’s “life.” Wicheln’s has already reminded us that the rhetorical scholar must be wary of falling too deeply into the trap of biography to the exclusion of criticism, and for this reason I have chosen to focus on the elements of “character” that I claim the entity (rather than the building) known as WNC possesses. A rhetorical biography, more specifically, explains the rhetorical choices made that created WNC as our national cathedral. Wicheln’s warning carries over eighty-eight years, but for this one case, before healthy criticism of anything about WNC can take place, there is the need to enter the mysterium of what created this character.

Exploring the rhetorical chassé from national Episcopal Cathedral to National Cathedral is more than a historical journey down memory lane. The rhetorical construction of Washing-
ton National Cathedral as the nation’s church includes discourses about the Cathedral by myriad players in the Cathedral’s genesis, fundraising, blessings, and dedications, as well as certain public discourses by various Presidents, their uses of the Cathedral, and the Cathedral’s choices involved in those uses. Additionally, the Cathedral, through purposeful outreach, has carefully crafted its image through its own journal and its modern Website. There is a continuous rhetorical arch from the initial idea of a national Cathedral and the appeal to the nation for its building to today bookended by asking the nation’s people, first, to build and, today, to repair—a house of prayer for all the people in our nation.

Essentially, WNC has created an ethos, a persona, over its genesis, and it is this ethos that justifies the term biography for this project. My Merriam-Webster’s Dictionary defines biography as a written history of a person’s life. Taken from the Greek root of bio, meaning life, a biography demands a living entity. This project reveals how WNC was planted, took root, grew and developed into a maturity, changing and forming over the course of its existence, until it finds its place and definition as a national cathedral in the best American sense of a national cathedral. It is constantly “becoming,” constantly seeking to find and establish just exactly what constitutes a “national cathedral.” This very sense of evolution, genesis, and becoming is what defines WNC as possessing ethos, or character. Yet, merely having ethos is not enough to justify its existence as a national cathedral. Beyond the possession of ethos, WNC also utilizes

---

13 On August 23, 2011, Washington National Cathedral sustained considerable damage in the 5.8 magnitude earthquake that struck the Washington, D.C. area. The highest elevated point in D.C., the central “Gloria in Excelsis” tower suffered damage to all four pinnacles. Several carvings on the outside of the Cathedral fell to the ground and cracks appeared in several of the flying buttresses. Thankfully, no foundational damage occurred and none of the stained-glass windows were damaged. However, the damage that did happen was costly due to the engineering considerations and stone masonry. The estimated cost for rehabilitation of the Cathedral was set at “tens of millions,” and immediate plans were made to raise at least $25 million from national donations.
the qualities of phronesis, arête, and eunoia so that it maximizes its persuasive appeal as that
public moral megaphone it claims to be.

The rhetorical biography of Washington National Cathedral begins with its conception,
naturally, and moves on to its birth and then into its growth and maturity. Because cathedrals
are built to stand until the end of time, this dissertation does not include its death. For our ca-
thedral, the story only lasts until it reaches its “high school” equivalent—young, on the brink of
earth-shattering discoveries, full of potential and lofty ideals. The Cathedral has suffered
scraped knees and huge embarrassments, a few mea culpas, and even a bit of scandal. It has
withstood an earthquake, a murder, and the possibility of the mixing in with the mortar the in-
cinerated ashes of the wife of one of the masonry w
orkers. Not only does the Cathedral enjoy
the whimsy of gargoyles, it enjoys the whimsy of our culture and history.

I have chosen write a rhetorical biography on an entity because that entity is one that
serves a unique place in our culture and because this entity is not a static or voiceless place.
There is a definite life of an idea that took form in the minds and dedication of untold numbers
of men and women beginning in 1791 and continuing beyond today. There is no precedent for
Washington National Cathedral and there is no precedent for a rhetorical biography of an enti-
ty. Just as WNC had to forge its way into existence as a national cathedral, I am forging a way
to bring the rhetorical journey of WNC into existence. The Cathedral’s ethos was not created
through moving from one smooth move to another; it was a continuous and repetitive inward
and outward weaving. First the Cathedral must justify itself, then it joins the world, then it
must attend to the need of its citizens, then it must help the citizens of the world, then it must
finish its building, then it must dialogue with the world, then it must attend to the needs of its
culture. Buildings do not react, they do not respond. WNC reacts and responds as it sees the nation’s spiritual center and moral compass ought to react and respond; and it has done so with enough of the qualities of wisdom, virtue, and good will to establish itself as the nation’s cathedral. Therefore, I have written a rhetorical biography. This seems appropriate.

Establishing an identity of a national cathedral is not necessarily a quantified process of qualities in the sense that Hart outlined in his rhetorical biography of Richard M. Nixon (Hart, 1976). Hart has precedent on which to base the qualities of biography and a tradition of process of analysis on which to rely. Hart is not alone in his rhetorical biography process and rhetorical biographies of individual orators are not uncommon. Rare, but not unheard of, rhetorical histories (not biographies) of entities, such as social movements, are respected in the field of rhetorical criticism. Taking cues from each genre, I approach this project, a rhetorical biography of an entity, using the concepts of understanding the rhetor’s ethos through the use of time segments.

Rhetorical history is best understood as social construction (Turner, 1998). Following this, then, rhetorical biography is best understood as a life construction. This dissertation is a


case study seeking to understand how the social, political, and religious contexts through which the rhetoric of WNC sought to create itself both reflect and construct that context. This rhetorical chronicle of WNC is configured by rhetoric about the Cathedral as well as by Cathedral as rhetoric. There is, therefore, no conceit in this projects’ intention to offer a rhetorical chronicle encompassing over two hundred years in this assumed national temple’s rise toward national status.

In order to understand time as a setting, historians break time into units of analysis—eras, periods, age, or movements, for example. For rhetorical historians, on the other hand, those units must be marked by changes in discourse. Those units provide the context explaining specific historical and rhetorical acts (Munshaw, 1973; Darsey J., 1991; Medhurst M. J., 1994). Historians neatly divide the past into analyzable units, labeling them, and presenting them as concrete moments of time—the Reformation, the Civil War era, the Cold War era, post 9/11—identifiable by phenomena that share one or more characteristics (Munshaw, 1973). Rhetoricians have more difficulty in creating historical units of discourse, but one way to form chunks of time is by situational exigencies that cause a change in the discourse. Sometimes those exigencies are dramatic, or catalytic (Darsey J., 1991), and based on historical events rather than rhetorical ones. In the case of WNC, not only did historical catalytic events change the discourse—WWI, the Great Depression, WWII, Vietnam, etc.—but also the periodic change in Cathedral deans and American presidents, men who reflected the time in which each lived, changed the rhetoric.

Although rhetoricians may be new to the idea of a building as “life-like,” at the very least, geographers have considered the possibility, as have architects, that buildings have “life
cycles.” A case could be made that the basic human desire, and perhaps need, to create a “home” out of a “house” is certainly an example of creating ethos for a building structure. The project at hand, as a work of the rhetorical nature, proposes to use the literary example and apply it to the first geographic/architectural example. Therefore, the Cathedral of St. Peter and St. Paul becomes Washington National Cathedral. I do not wish to write a biography of the building, but of the persona of the building. The building then “becomes,” over the course of more than a century, an entity with a defined ethos. The rhetorical process of “becoming” requires the researcher to consider the cyclic nature of formation.

The determination of time breaks fell naturally along the combined breaks in U.S. history and the changes in Bishops and Deans of the Cathedral. I therefore have divided this rhetorical biography according to the identifiable breaks that combine both our larger national history along with the changes in WNC leadership reflected in two hundred twenty-three years of ideological existence divided into eight moments of rhetorical change: conceptual idea (1791-1892), covering the original vision that led to the building of the Cathedral and which included the idea that the Cathedral would be a national house of prayer; Satterlee’s (1895-1907) vision of the Episcopal faith as representing all faiths justifying the Cathedral as the best source of moral direction for the nation and its leaders; the time of Americanizing (1908-1938) the Cathedral as the foundation for moral progress in the aftermaths of World War I and the Great Depression, and leading up to the beginning of World War II; the Cathedral during World War II while Bishop Freeman expounded the Cathedral as means of national and spiritual unity includ-

16 McNeill, D. & McNamara, K. (2012). “The life and death of great hotels: A building biography of Sydney’s ‘The Australia.’” Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers, 37 (1), p. 149-163. This article gives a literature review of architectural and geographic scholars that have written of homes, dwellings, and buildings as attachments of man. It is also an example of the possibility of a building biography.
ing tourism, patriotic support, and the beginning of a ministry of universal calling; the Sayre years (1952-1977) naming the Cathedral as voice for social activism, especially for civil and human rights, and a forceful voice calling political figures toward ethical and responsible action; the 1990 completion of the building of WNC and its rise as an American ‘Westminster Abbey’ in the sense of its use for inaugural prayer services and state funerals; as the foremost venue in interfaith dialogue in a post 9/11 world with a renewed sense of liberal social and theological activism that includes women in ministry and same-sex marriage; and, finally, as a uniquely defined national cathedral serving national purposes as demonstrated by its ability to transcend its physical place during the 9/11/11 prayer service and by its recent use for the funerals of national heroes astronaut Neil Armstrong and Senator Daniel Inouye. In these moments of change, the rhetoric of the Cathedral follows the dictates of its current world so that as the world changed and the nation’s needs changed, the Cathedral also changed.

Across all eight chapters in the rhetorical history of WNC, there are three broad locations of rhetorical production: rhetoric about the cathedral, the cathedral as rhetoric, and the cathedral as context at the moment when context operates as text, i.e., the uses of the Cathedral as setting, such as “a house of prayer for all people” and “the spiritual home for the nation.” There is a fourth to add to the loci for the duration of Dean Sayre’s tenure as he embodies the Cathedral as he travels for his activist causes.

For the first theme, the rhetoric about the cathedral naturally is taken from people speaking about WNC both from within the Cathedral and by the media, giving meaning to its existence. Each chapter will include rhetoric taken from either the personal records or correspondence of the Dean of the WNC, the Bishop of Washington, or some other representative of
the Cathedral, from the published record of WNC’s own magazine, *Cathedral Age* or other Cathedral publication including its official Website, and from media coverage such as newspapers, magazines, books, film, radio, television, and the Internet.

Second, WNC obviously speaks as an architectural and artistic canvas. There is no way to experience the Cathedral without addressing its physical nature. Although there will not be a separate chapter on the Cathedral’s architecture, the Cathedral’s physical appearance and growth over time has a direct effect on the rhetoric of WNC, just as it has served as rhetoric by its very growing existence, since each stage of its completion represents its practical use to the nation. Decisions to incorporate the mixture of American ideals and history with the theological aspects of the cathedral take on a dominant underlying psychology fitting WNC for its national role.

The third theme, the Cathedral as context, is the most subtle, and yet most vital, rhetorical form of WNC. In this sense, the Cathedral, in its effort to speak as the spiritual home for the nation, as the best and most obvious venue for spiritual gatherings for the nation, and as the spiritual voice for the nation, is able to do so because the Cathedral not only answers to the needs of the time, it also begins to brings certain needs of the time to the social conscience in order to exact moral change. Taking full advantage of the separation of church and state, the Cathedral is unafraid to enter into the controversial fray and be the forefront of social change and the definer of what a “national cathedral” is. In this mode, the Cathedral provides a certain ethos to any event held there, but that event being held there also contributes to legitimizing the status of the Cathedral as “the National Cathedral.”
Finally, the fourth theme is that of Sayre’s deanship from 1952-1977. In this one instance, Sayre’s time at the Cathedral acted uniquely as synecdoche in that wherever Sayre traveled, he took the authority and aura of the Cathedral with him in a way that no other dean or bishop has ever done. The Cathedral and Sayre, in essence, are synonymous.

For eighty-three years, WNC slowly evolved and grew not only in its physical stature, but also in its own awareness of its usefulness and necessity in an otherwise secular state; and in fact each chapter will show that the Cathedral, despite its constant need for funds or its physical incompleteness, looks to the times and does what it must in order to fill a basic state need. These three loci of rhetorical production (the fourth is finite for Sayre) constantly thread their way through this entire project.

At times the Cathedral is open and blatant in its appeal to serve as national temple by offering public notices and by inviting the media to publicize its theological works and architectural and artistic contributions. Since the 1920s, the Cathedral has invited major publications to photograph and record its progress. Additionally, invitations to speak at or for the Cathedral have been extended to every President beginning with McKinley and most have accepted. At other times, the Cathedral simply responds to the times. In fact, its initial groundbreaking with the Peace Cross in 1898 was a response to the quick ending of the Spanish-American War. Although the Peace Cross dedication was calculated by Bishop Satterlee as the means to getting the idea of the Cathedral into public awareness, it was not without its spiritual message. Always, WNC is mindful of its own self-proclaimed designation as the nation’s cathedral. The contextual enterprises of WNC are easily construed as calculated to serve its own needs, however, this project means to reveal as calculated as the moments are or seem to be, WNC never
loses sight of its ultimate being as a house of prayer for all people, a temple built for the glory of a Christian God, ordained by George Washington, the spiritual home of the nation, and national moral compass. It is the Cathedral that defines “national purposes.”

I chose specific artifacts for analysis within each chapter based on its contribution in creating the rhetorical Cathedral within a given context. These artifacts, including documents, parts of the Cathedral, persons acting in the name of the Cathedral, actions within the Cathedral, and media coverage, are rhetorically analyzed through the practice of a conceptually driven contextual reading. James Jasinski claims that “conceptually orientated criticism proceeds through the constant interaction of careful reading and conceptual reflection” (Jasinski, 2001, p. 139). The pendulum process between the concept of “national cathedral” and the rhetoric used to produce WNC must be considered as a “work-in-progress…as the critic’s understanding of the object grows or develops as conceptual thickening helps to illuminate its diverse qualities” (p. 139). The Cathedral is now built, but it took eighty-three years; and its assumptive national identity is not, even to this day, quite as cut-in-stone as the building itself. For this reason, it is important to consider WNC not as a stone building or monument, but as a living, evolving entity.

A constructivist orientation, for Jasinski and for me, focuses on the “imbrication [overlapping] of the performative and representational capacities of language...discursive practices create what they describe as they simultaneously describe what they create” (Jasinski, 1998, p. 74). Orienting my dissertation in this constructivist framework prevents pinpointing specific points in my historical groupings as representative of an absolute moment of time and rhetoric. This dissertation is not about a finite text; it is about an idea that has been slowly forming, or
constituting, itself for over a century. For WNC, time and space are, as Jasinski explains, “exper-
iential potentialities” that are not only empirical, but also uniquely generational and, there-
fore, ongoing. This rhetorical history focuses on the term “national” as a concept to explore an
object that slowly over the course of its creation learns its own constitutive nature. This re-
quires not a prolonged criticism of a text, but an uncovering of many texts in order to under-
stand the object of today—knowing that the object we study still advances in time and space,
absorbing the ideals and the continuing history of the social, political, and religious world it in-
habits.

For the Cathedral’s early years, the available discourse is fairly limited and documented
by Satterlee and his biographer, the Rev. Charles Brent. Once Bishop Freeman initiates the Ca-
thedral’s own magazine, The Cathedral Age, in 1925, and after the later common use of film,
radio, television, and the Internet, the available texts becomes quickly overwhelming. I chose
to limit texts to those available and verifiable in the Cathedral archives, such as The Cathedral
Age, sermons, letters and memos, cathedral artifacts, the cathedral website, and news articles
and sermons published in The Washington Post (or the Evening Star) as the city’s newspaper of
record.

This cathedral is always an agency of its time, and the time in which it is studied is es-
sentially never-ending, blending into the next moment. The attempt to “break down its rhetor-
ical elements so completely as to determine how they function” within a specific context
(Darsey J. F., 1994, p. 253) must be tempered with the reality that this cathedral is not a specific
moment in time, but is an ongoing example of rhetorical discourse. It is the composite of many
parts linked by many years, brought to light and placed in relation to other composite parts,
that reveals how WNC is ‘becoming’ in each segment of its generation. This is what creates the national characteristic of WNC.

Included texts are those that represent a defined pattern that speaks to that national characteristic: 1) the idea that the Cathedral was meant from the beginning to be a necessary component of the federal city as envisioned by George Washington, 2) the Cathedral represents the American character based on Christian ideals, 3) the Cathedral is meant to be a national and international moral compass, 4) the Cathedral compares favorably with Westminster Abbey as the “place of sepulture” for the nation’s great and honored dead, and 5) the Cathedral is a house of prayer for all, the spiritual home for the nation, and a witness to “Americanism” because residing within the Cathedral is the national consciousness as a moral people and spiritual people. What changes over time is the varying degree of emphasis on certain of these loci of rhetorical productions.

The chosen method of analysis follows along the same lines as those studies by Griffin and Darsey that encompass an entire social movement longitudinally, not restricted to specific leaders, organizations, or events. I do not make the claim that the Cathedral is a social movement, but the Cathedral does follow a sort of life cycle, albeit a very long cycle with an unforeseeable end. This rhetorical history relies on people speaking and writing in their time, and

---

even though I do not make claims of individual effectiveness of artifacts, there are recorded responses to the rhetoric revolving around, about, and by the Cathedral, all acting cumulatively to produce the product we see today known as Washington National Cathedral. Pulling through the three loci of rhetorical production on each chosen artifact (and, for Sayre, a fourth locus), requires an understanding of the context that creates it, for the main reason that “men who play roles in the making of history are judged finally by their influence upon people and events” (Thonssen & Baird, 1948, p. 448). Importantly, I follow Griffin’s principle that the critic must judge the artifact or discourse according to public opinion originating in the time the discourse occurs (Griffin, 1958; Griffin, 1952). This allowed me to pick up on how the “national” thread that constitutes the Cathedral was justified and authorized from era to era. Not least, I also follow Griffin’s principle of striving to preserve “the idiom in which the movement was actually expressed;” and, in this “quality of dynamism,” and as the chapters essentially are topical as well as chronological, the entire work reflects a narrative nature (Griffin, 1952, pp. 187-188). In this sense, I affirmatively see the entire history of WNC as a story that demands both narrative probability and fidelity (Fisher W., 1984) because there is no logical reason for its present defined existence. This entire project is bound in how WNC came to be and how it maintains its existence; and this story is also inevitably a public moral argument.

Even though rhetorical criticism is often seen as filling in the gaps of a mosaic, there is the assumption that other pieces of the mosaic already exist and the critic’s job is simply to add to the completion. This dissertation is limited by a complete lack of a WNC mosaic on which to add. The first pieces of the mosaic must be formed and an idea of its contours must be developed. They arise out of a vast vacuum and only slowly find formation since there is no prece-
dent for a national cathedral and there is no definition of what constitutes “national purposes” other than what the Cathedral proposes.

**Chapter Overview**

An ambitious rhetorical history is not, in fact, one that contains every single perspective possible, but contains one perspective, faithfully, for to “argue that all perspectives have equal claim to the rectitude of historical evolution” would be to allow for the perspective of non-existence as well—and that is counterproductive to any project (Clark & McKerrow, 1998, p. 38). Although social, economic, political and religious contexts created the rhetoric that made WNC the national Cathedral, only those social, economic, political and religious contexts that give meaning and sustenance to those chosen WNC artifacts are a part of this project for there must be a line drawn in order to create the units of historical demarcation necessary to break apart the bulk of WNC archival evidence and to answer my specific research question.

To this end, this dissertation contains the following chapters:

Chapter two focuses on the historical background that led to the idea of a national Cathedral. The historical narrative begins with L’Enfant’s original plan for the new federal city, including a church for national purposes (Kite, 1970; Bratenahl, 1911). There are three subheadings representing the planting of the seed of the idea of a national temple beginning with newly inaugurated President George Washington’s hiring of Pierre L’Enfant to design the new Federal City (Kite, 1970). This initial concept quickly faded from plans for the new Federal City. The second subheading considers the continued held vision by one Washington, D.C. cleric and his Episcopal family for the idea of the national church after L’Enfant was fired from the Federal City project ending with the first financial legacy toward the idea of a national church (Feller &
Fishwick, 1965; Bratenahl, 1911). The third subheading explores the rhetorical remembrances of this obscure, but persistent, Episcopal vision for building a church that would serve national purposes ending with a Congressional charter signed into effect in 1893 (Hewlet, 2007). In the end, this chapter serves to explain how the idea of a national church is carried forward for one hundred years—from L’Enfant’s 1791 blueprint of the Federal City to 1892 when President Benjamin Harrison signed the Congressional Charter incorporating the National Cathedral Foundation.

Chapter three examines Bishop Satterlee’s vision for WNC once the Congressional Charter had been signed, the Cathedral Foundation formed, and the plan confirmed by the General Convention to build a national cathedral. Satterlee’s fundraising rhetoric is fundamental in getting the Cathedral ground consecrated and broken just before his death in 1907. This chapter contains four subheadings that represent Satterlee’s four major decisions in bringing the idea to a reality on a very grand scale: where matters, the idea matters, why matters, and what kind matters.

Chapter four reflects the challenges that world war and world economic depression had on fundraising for WNC. This chapter has two subheadings that focus on the changed discourse of Satterlee’s visionary rhetoric of an idea to the rhetoric of justification and Americanizing of the Cathedral building and on how the Cathedral iconography works to incorporate Americana into its religious frame.

Chapter five discusses “the broader usefulness and functions of the Church in time of national crisis” (United services at Washington Cathedral, 1942), as an air raid post, and by sponsoring evening tours, and Saturday tours specifically for servicemen staying in Washington,
D.C. During this time, Cathedral rhetoric changed to focus from the previous outward “sisterhood of nations” rhetoric to an inward focused rhetoric based on WNC’s national nature and on its role as the home of peace and reconciliation, of “comradeship and cooperation” (United services at Washington Cathedral, 1942).

This chapter has four subheadings beginning with the first two containing tourism, especially for children and soldiers, during and immediately after World War II that helped show off the continued building of the Cathedral, being close to half completed, bringing in not only awareness of its existence, but its ecumenical and national character. The third subheading focuses on the rhetorical changes from a national foundation to a Christian unity foundation as *The Cathedral Age* publishes more ecumenical voices, most notably by the Jewish voice,\(^\text{18}\) during the war (Freeman J. E., 1943). The final subheading represents the state use of WNC for “national purposes” in the way initially envisioned by L’Enfant and will focus on President Franklin Roosevelt’s use of the Cathedral for prayer services during the war and for inaugural prayer services, although he himself did not attend due to his physical condition.\(^\text{19}\)

Chapter six shows how the Rev. Sayre changed the vision of the Cathedral from a focus on the building to a symbol of activism, carrying the Cathedral with him in all he says and does. There are four “instances” showing how the rhetoric of the Cathedral changed yet again from a sharp focus on Christianity and American patriotism to outward mission and activism. These four “instances” are his outspokenness at the Army-McCarthy hearings, his civil rights activism, his Vietnam protest, and his support of the Palestinian refugees.

---

\(^{18}\) As recorded in the Spring 1943 *Cathedral Age*, when the Dean and Cathedral offices discovered that Jewish chaplains could not adequately care for the number of Jewish servicemen stationed in the Washington area, they offered the use of the cathedral parish hall.

\(^{19}\) Internal memorandum issued February 21, 1933 (WNC archives, 132, 1, 10).
Chapter seven focuses on the completion of the Cathedral—as far as the physical building is concerned, for a Cathedral is never truly finished. There are two subheadings in this chapter. The first subheading focuses on the completion ceremony held exactly 94 years after the laying of the foundation stone, including the role played by President George H. W. Bush. The second subheading shows how WNC subsumes a normative stance in serving as the national *de facto* temple for national purposes in its use for state funerals and inaugural prayer services.

Chapter eight focuses on the impact of 9/11 on WNC and its role in our national discourse. This chapter includes two subheadings. The first focuses on how the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001 impacted how the Cathedral is able to live up to its national mission and vision. Specifically, this first subheading focuses on the prayer service called by President George W. Bush for September 14, 2001 and the subsequent Cathedral response. The second subheading focuses on a renewed sense of activism that arises from needs manifesting out of the 9/11 crisis as being a Cathedral that is truly answerable to the nation and its values. This section focuses on women in the priesthood, same-sex marriage, and Christian-Muslim dialogue.

Finally, chapter nine concludes with a focus on WNC’s ability to transcend its ethos away from its physical structure considering the earthquake that occurred in Washington, D.C. in August 2011. This chapter has two subheadings. The first focuses on the earthquake of August 23 and the memorial concert for tenth anniversary of 9/11 that was moved to the Kennedy Center. The second subheading focuses on the most recent rhetoric of WNC. First, the essential role of national temple for the burial of national heroes when the funeral and memorial services for
astronaut Neil Armstrong and Senator Daniel Inouye occurred in late 2012 reveals that no rhetoric about the funeral service questioned the place or the religious service.

**Minor Details**

I have tried to provide footnotes that explain certain aspects of the world of Washington National Cathedral. There are some minor details, however, that I chose to cover here. First, the Episcopal Church hierarchy is represented by the Presiding Bishop who is called “The Most Reverend;” diocesan bishops are called “The Rt. Reverend;” the Cathedral dean is called “The Very Reverend;” and priests are called “Reverend.” Second, all archival data came from the Cathedral archives and are denoted in footnotes as “WNC ChA.”
CHAPTER 2: CONCEPTION

2.1 Pierre L’Enfant and the new Federal City

“A church [should be erected] for national purposes, such as public prayer, thanksgiving, funeral orations, etc.; and be assigned to the special use of no particular denomination or sect; but be equally open to all. It will likewise be a shelter for such monuments as were voted by the last Continental Congress for the heroes who fell in the cause of liberty.”

“Pierre L’Enfant

According to lore, Washington National Cathedral was conceived during the first presidential term. On January 24, 1791, President Washington commissioned Major Pierre L’Enfant to design the nation’s newly designated capital, “a territory of ten square miles, on both sides of the river Potomac, so as to comprehend Georgetown, in Maryland” (Annals of Congress, 1789-1825, p. 360). Written in the margin of the “PLAN of the CITY” that L’Enfant gave to George Washington for the newly appointed Federal City, L’Enfant allowed for a grand equestrian statue of George Washington, five grand fountains with a grand cascading fountain, a large public square with a grand avenue leading from George Washington’s statue to Congressional gardens, and a church intended for national purposes. L’Enfant made plans for a church befitting the grand new nation. In his plans, L’Enfant centrally placed a church for national purposes between Washington’s Statue and the President’s house.

Having grown up in aristocratic France, L’Enfant modeled his plan after the grandiose Versailles, but with important new conceptual changes reflecting a new nation as well as the wealth of the new nation and using American materials and industry (Kite, 1970, p. 14). The Introduction of Kite’s book by Jean Jules Jusserand, interpreted the proposed edifice as “a tem-
ple 20 for semireligious celebrations” (p. 19), while Kite points out the plan’s actual wording as a ‘church intended for national purposes...’ (p. 64). How L’Enfant felt about religion is missing, but he recognized the national and political need for a place to hold politically sacred ceremonies, such as state funerals, inaugurations, and speeches. Determining what L’Enfant had in mind, exactly, may not be completely ascertainable; however, L’Enfant was an ardent American admirer and wanted the new capital to reflect American ideals.

The ideal, as we now conceive it, of a separation of church and state was not yet in place in 1791, and although the Bill of Rights had been written and ratified, they were not officially a part of the Constitution until December 15, 1791, eleven months after Washington commissioned L’Enfant. The religious ideals we now find so natural and assumed were not a part of the national or cultural psyche at the time L’Enfant created his city plan that included this temple/church, although there was great general resistance to and suspicion of an establishment of the Anglican Church, or the Church of England in America (Wilson & Drakeman, 1987, pp. 64-67). The abuses of both English government and church, in their gross disregard for the nature of the growing colonies and their sense of American nationality and (for them) religious pluralism, fed the growing discourse of separation of allegiance to both Great Britain and the Church of England. This history aside, what L’Enfant designed and planned for in the new Federal City, was not a church representing an establishment of a specific faith, but a place for those sacred needs of any nation. In fact, L’Enfant planned specifically for the grand avenue

---

20 A temple is a place reserved for religious and/or spiritual needs such as prayer, sacrifice, or certain other ceremonies. Temples are represented in almost every religion and culture and tend to embody architectural grandeur. A church, on the other hand, for Christian-based cultures, is a space devoted to the body of Christ, and, therefore, salvation. Jean Jules Jusserand (1855-1932) was a French writer and diplomat serving as the French ambassador to the United States during World War I. His use of the word “temple” instead of “church” is not a matter of simple translation. CHURCH in French is translated as ‘eglise’ while TEMPLE is translated as “temple.” The plan, written by L’Enfant in English, clearly says CHURCH.
leading to the Federal House (Capitol Building) to be surrounded by public squares meant for the use of statues, columns, obelisks, or any other type of monument the military or any religious denomination might feel necessary. The “PLAN of the CITY” (the colonial version of a survey and blueprint) is clearly written in English. The corresponding key to codes within the plan is written on the left margin. Lettered A through M, L’Enfant spelled out his concept for the central components of the city. Reference letter “D” states,

This Church is intended for national purposes, such as public prayer, thanksgiving, funeral orations etc. and assigned to the special use of no particular Sect or denomination, but equally open to all. It will be likewise a proper shelter for such monuments as were noted by the late Continental Congress for those heroes who fell in the cause of liberty, and for such others as may hereafter be decreed by the voice of a grateful Nation (p. 64, see Appendix A).

The Second Continental Congress that met from 1777-1789 had to deal with structuring the new nation, including how to honor the fallen. The men of this Congress were men of religious conviction, even as they questioned Christian philosophies common at the time, and even as they demanded a secular-based government. Burial of the dead was not only a matter of practicality; it was a matter of religious principle (Library of Congress, 2010). However, it should be emphasized that L’Enfant’s plan did not include a cemetery; rather, his concern was for the memorialization of the American hero.

In the end, L’Enfant was fired a little over a year after he was hired over land surveys and real estate issues, and the concept of the temple/church disappeared from the capital.

---

21 However, his plan did not allow for any cemeteries within the Federal City itself.
plans without even a small discussion between L’Enfant and Washington, or anyone else apparently. The only remaining evidence of L’Enfant’s inclusion of this quasi-religious, and mostly patriotic, space is in his letter to Washington and his original sketch of the mall.

2.2 The Idea Carries Forward One Hundred Years

The concept, however, did not disappear with L’Enfant. As early as 1792, the Rt. Rev. Thomas Claggett, the first Episcopal bishop of Maryland, along with Episcopalian Joseph Nourse, Washington’s first Registrar of the Treasury, felt the need for an Episcopal church in the newly forming capital city. Their conception of this church was not as one as a part of the Federal City, but overlooking the City from a hill named Mt. St. Alban (Feller & Fishwick, 1965). The religious and political make-up of the first Congress was necessarily heavily attached to the Anglican faith because it was the national heritage assumed from Great Britain (Bratenahl, 1911; Tiffany, 1903; Brauer, 1953). Despite the name change from Anglican to Episcopalian made at the first American (Episcopalian) General Convention in 1785, and despite the parallel constitution the Episcopal General Convention ratified for itself in 1789, the Protestant Episcopal Church was considered an English institution (Tiffany, 1903), and anti-British feelings still rang high.

The religious atmosphere at the time valued personal relationships with God rather than social or communitarian relationships founded on common religious belief associated with institutional religion. Thomas Paine, in 1793, wrote The Age of Reason in which he exemplified the religious/political feelings of his day. His book was written to “combat atheism by defending what he believed to be the ‘true religion’” of using one’s own mind and reason to determine belief (Brauer, 1953, p. 89). To Paine, Protestantism was as bad as Catholicism in that they
both demanded creeds of belief. Creeds beget superstition and, according to Paine, the only way to combat the superstition of religious institutions was to use the brain God gave man to discover God through God’s other creations found in nature.

The age of the empirical had a stronghold on the new American nation. Although it took a while to gain real strength, the “nature and science” thinking that begin to take hold at the end of the eighteenth century was aided by the rhetoric of the revolution and national creation: Each person was created equal under the law of the Creator and each person had entitlement to use reason to access religious truth—individually attained (Brauer, 1953). The umbilical attachment to the state was severed for churches in the New World and this gave the individual churches both the opportunity and tedium of finding financial backing in order to function. It is no wonder that L’Enfant’s great Church idea was lost in the religious freedom rhetoric of the time. The concept of an Episcopal church acting as the stage for national ceremony was not met with firm approval of the ‘right’ men. The strongmen of the time, those with access to great libraries, the printing press, education, and political power—Thomas Jefferson and James Madison (and other such men)—had had enough of institutional religion. Although many of these men understood religion as a source for moral good for a moral society, and clearly made statements claiming such, religious freedom for the common man was seen as freedom from forced or assumed national religion.

Despite the claim made that the majority of the Declaration of Independence signers were Episcopalian (Feller & Fishwick, 1965), the truth is that there was little fervency in their church affiliations. That the first Congress found it expedient to elect a Chaplain and that the first Chaplain was Episcopalian, was not a reflection of the power of the Episcopalian faith. In
fact by 1811 the Episcopal Church, as such, almost disappeared altogether.\textsuperscript{22} The planted seed of a national church lay dormant for almost a century.

Post-Civil War changes are more than well documented. The age of reconstruction, the robber baron, the trans-Atlantic railroad, pacification of the Native-American (formerly referred to as Natives or Indians), reconstruction of the South, and the finishing touches of the westward plunge all became part of American history. Less known, yet obviously important to this project, is the growth of Washington, D.C. and the necessary connection to New York City as the birthplace of the first Episcopal bishop of Washington. The role of wealth and its attendant privileges as well as its tiny social circle are all important in the birth of WNC. Likewise, the post-Civil War period of American religious history had a profound impact on the reception of the public, both good and bad, in building a national cathedral, no matter how noble its mission.

That there was any form of the Episcopal Church by the end of the Civil War is a testament to the precious few men who kept trying to maintain and bring new life to the faith. The Nourse family, over the decades and generations, had maintained the land at Mt. St. Alban for ecclesiastic purposes. A small church and boy’s school, St. John’s School, was built on the Nourse land just prior to the Civil War. As part of a lasting legacy, Joseph Nourse’s granddaugh-

\textsuperscript{22} For example, when the bishop of Virginia died in 1813, only seven priests representing fourteen parishes even showed up to elect a new bishop and half the parishes in Maryland and Delaware were vacant. There were no seminaries to educate new priests, if any men had decided to answer the religious calling. Between the differing bishops there was little spiritual fraternity, only social politeness, due to power games. In the south, either no bishops were named at all, or if named, not ever even consecrated. In fact, in Georgia, the church never bothered to accept the 1789 General Convention constitution (Tiffany, 1903). The first Chaplain, Samuel Provoost, resigned from his bishopric after his wife died in 1801. When faced with Provoost’s resignation, the House of Bishops almost refused to accept the unprecedented action of resignation, but decided instead to stand ready to “consecrate…any person who may be presented to them with the requisite … religious, moral, and literary character” (p. 394). The saddest moment came when in 1808 only two bishops attended the General Convention in Baltimore and only seven dioceses were represented with either priest or lay persons.
ter, Phoebe Nourse, at her death in 1850, left a small box containing forty gold dollars inscribed with the instruction that the money was “the beginning of a fund for a free church at Mt. Alban” (Feller & Fishwick, 1965; Satterlee H. Y., 1899, p. 69). This money acted as impetus for building the still standing St. Alban’s church that almost seemed to act as placeholder for the later cathedral built next to it. Meanwhile, the nation had to survive its own growing pains.

2.3 The National Cathedral Foundation Charter of 1893

The idea of a national cathedral for the Episcopal Church was not assumed by anyone. The Church’s own growing pains do not foretell a massive national project since internal growth, from priests to parishioners, was quite slow and focused mainly on the East Coast. After a time, however, there was the understanding that, in order to survive and compete for souls, the Church had to expand and proselytize in a novel manner. Part of the growing and evolving was the understanding of the District of Columbia as different from Maryland, proper. Just as there were two different jurisdictions for the state and the district, there came an awareness that the Diocese of Maryland was growing too unwieldy and there needed to be a separate Episcopal diocese of Washington. In prophetic manner, Dr. Charles H. Hall, rector of

---

23 The reference to a “free church” is assumed in its meaning in the references to it in primary sources. There was at the time a practice in, at the very least, Episcopal churches wherein a major source of church income was renting pews. The pew rental system was based on a number of factors including socio-economic status or wealth, gender, and previous donations to the church. This practice was an affront to Rev. Satterlee, who sought to end the practice at his two previous assignments, but most strongly at Calvary in New York City. Satterlee’s argument was that it disallowed the poor, the infrequent, the seeking, and the visitor a place to sit. Additionally, he saw private ownership of pews in a House of God contrary to the Gospel and encouraged an attitude that the church was some kind of private religious club house (Hewlett, 2007). The refusal of the vestry to stop the practice led Satterlee to feel ever stronger that a House of God was meant to be “A house of prayer for all people,” taken directly from Isaiah 56:7 that says, “…for my house will be called a house of prayer for all nations.” An additional understanding of the term ‘free church’ refers to the separation of church and state. Satterlee writes in The Building of a Cathedral that “The only connection between Church and State that ever is, or should be, recognized in our free country is in each individual man, who is, at one and the same time, a citizen of the United States and a citizen of the Kingdom of Heaven” (Satterlee H. Y., The building of a cathedral, 1901, p. 9).
the Church of the Epiphany, a prominent parish in Washington, D.C., declared that when the proper moment came for the Church to join the national religious chorus, the hill at St. Alban’s would be the site of that national cathedral (Satterlee H. Y., 1901, p. 5).

The Episcopal Church at this time was incredibly small and fractured. Focused mainly on the East coast, the faith nearly did not survive the Revolutionary War because the clergy tended to be Royalist and many returned to Great Britain. What clergy remained, stayed to change the organization of the church to match the organization of the new United States’ government. In 1789, the General Convention of the Episcopal Church met, adjusted the *Book of Common Prayer*, wrote a national constitution for the church, and created a process to ordain ministers and create new bishops. By 1862 the church was a loose confederation of independent dioceses with the vast majority of faithful located in New York City, Baltimore, Philadelphia, and Boston. The social elite of the era, such as the Satterlees, Vanderbilts, and the Morgans, were members and congregants of the Episcopal faith. In the populated areas, socio-economic status could easily be revealed by looking at church rosters. At the bottom were the Baptists, then Methodists, Presbyterians, and finally, at the top, Episcopalians (Hewlett, 2007). Thus, the many jokes, popular still today, regarding this double helix of religion and economics. From this one might believe that the Episcopal churches were flush with money available for charitable donations. This would be wrong, but the connection between the social and economic elite and the Episcopal Church is important to point out for reasons explained in Chapter Three.

Getting a cathedral foundation started took a group of dedicated men, and a few women, years to set into place. Around 1889-1890, the bishop of Maryland, the Rt. Rev. William Paret, came to an understanding that Washington, D.C. needed a cathedral as a way to answer
the unanswered call for a national church as L’Enfant had originally planned (Satterlee H. Y., 1901). Already the Methodists had built American University, the Catholics had built Catholic University, and the Baptists had built Columbia University (Feller & Fishwick, 1965). However, Paret felt the Episcopal Church did not have the necessary dowry to compete in the university setting. He instead set his sight on building a cathedral, a project that, although a much larger financial undertaking in the long run, potentially created a more lasting legacy in the national sense.

Paret’s interest on the cathedral idea can be traced to a series of letters beginning with a letter from the Rev. George William Douglas (rector of St. John’s Church) and the Rev. Randolph H. McKim (rector of the Church of Epiphany) written on October 27, 1890 to Bishop Paret. That letter stated that the time had come to form a Cathedral Foundation and that, “If a movement to this end can be started on broad lines and promoted by the parochial clergy in a spirit of Christian fellowship, [then both Douglas and McKim] are of an opinion that it would be both practicable and wise,” and they wanted the bishop’s blessing to begin the project.24 Paret responded November 1, 1890 to George William Douglas that the time had come to make an Episcopalian presence due to support of prominent men he apparently had been in conversation with regarding the cathedral idea; his only concern being that building a cathedral not be the cause of division between diocese or competition with St. John the Divine Cathedral in New York, also being built at that time.25 Answering Paret’s letter, Douglas responds on November 12 in a letter marked “Confidential” that Mr. R. H. Goldsborough was willing to give a five hun-

---

24 Douglas and McKim to Paret, 27 October 1890. WNC, ChA: j. 117, b. 1, f. 4.
25 Paret to Douglas, 1 November 1890. WNC, ChA: j. 117, b. 1, f. 4.
dred square foot tract of land in North West Washington for the proposed cathedral. Mr. Goldsborough, a self-employed real estate manager, “very strongly entertained” an opinion for which he felt “morally certain” that this donation would be made. Bishop Paret responded to the generous donation by accepting the gift on behalf of the church. By November 21, the land in question had increased to several choices of land of not less than 240,000 square feet surrounded by a street on all sides; although, the actual address of the land has not yet been mentioned in any letter between Paret, Douglas, or Goldsborough. The physical address seems to be a matter of secrecy unless or until the bishop made an actual decision on the specific land he preferred. As Paret announced his eminent arrival in Washington to view the land in question, Douglas reveals in a letter written November 25 that one land option is “about as far from Dupont Circle as Dupont Circle is from the White House” and the other choice is “a trifle further,” and an added bonus to the second choice is that President Cleveland’s house is across the street. Douglas closes his letter by quoting an old adage “Bis Dat qui Cito Dat.” Prime real estate, strategically selected, is placed before the bishop as incentive for what is still only an idea.

Having the power of a land donation in hand, on November 9, 1891, Bishop Paret called for a meeting at the home of Charles C. Glover, president of Riggs Bank, where a group of men and Miss Mary Elizabeth Mann, a congregant of Douglas’ parish, met to discuss the idea of a national cathedral (Feller & Fishwick, 1965; Hewlett, 2007). Miss Mann had, in April, offered the initial willed gift of eight city lots to get the idea started (Hewlett, 2007). Minutes of the meeting reveal that

26 Douglas to Paret, 12 November 1890. WNC, ChA: j. 117, b. 1, f. 4.
27 Bis Dat qui Cito Dat is interpreted as “he gives twice who gives promptly” or a gift given without hesitation is as good as two gifts.
meeting either were not kept or have been lost, but there must have been lively discussion on
the pros and cons of such a building project, which was understood to be a mighty undertaking,
for the group left the meeting with grave reservations and the decision to keep dialoguing
(Hewlett, 2007). Without adequate endowment for building a university, as other faiths were
doing at the time, these Episcopalians eventually agreed to undertake a possible decades-long
project, for no cathedral is ever built quickly. Taken from his book, *The Building of a Cathedral*,
Satterlee’s rendition of this historical meeting is painfully brief, only stating that they met, they
talked, they decided, and then planned (Satterlee H. Y., 1901). Of course Satterlee was not at
the meeting and is merely outlining how the idea of the cathedral began, yet this meeting was
not a simple gathering with a motion to build a cathedral, seconded, and voted on. People
liked the idea of a national cathedral, but the undertaking of the reality was obviously not a giv-
en.

Writing the charter that incorporated the cathedral foundation meant that the board of
directors had to have been agreed upon, that a plan for the cathedral had been made, and a
mission statement had to have been considered and agreed upon. The ensuing exchange of
letters between Bishop Paret, Douglas and McKim during the following year is testimony to the
enormous thought energy that went into the idea of a national cathedral. Playing devil’s advo-
cate, Paret raised so many objections that Glover felt the cathedral idea unsupported and
doomed. In the end, however, the men reconciled with the difficulties before them and com-
mitted themselves to the cathedral idea.28

---

28 Douglas to Paret, July 2, Nov. 18, Dec. 10, 1891; Glover to Paret, Dec. 15, 1891; McKim to Paret, Dec. 6, 1891,
Douglas to Paret Nov. 24, Dec. 19, Dec. 21, 1891, all in WNC, ChA: j. 117, b. 1, f. 4. See an excellent and detailed
elaboration of the specifics of incorporation in Hewlett’s *The Foundation Stone*. 
The need to incorporate the Cathedral Foundation was a matter of practical legality and had nothing to do with Congress desiring a national cathedral. The cathedral discourse makes great issue to note that the cathedral was chartered by Congress with that charter duly signed into being by President Benjamin Harrison. However, the truth of the matter was that in order for the foundation to accept the gifts of land in Washington, D.C. the foundation had to be incorporated since D.C. did not at that time charter charitable organizations (Hewlett, 2007). The incorporation created the Protestant Episcopal Cathedral Foundation of the District of Columbia (PECF), allowing the foundation to acquire, take by devise, bequest, or otherwise, hold, purchase, encumber, and convey such real and personal estate as shall be required for the purposes of its incorporation...Said corporation is hereby empowered to establish and maintain within the District of Columbia a cathedral and institutions of learning for the promotion of religion and education and charity (Appendix B).

Attached to the incorporation was a list of the newly named Board of Directors who were given power to accept financial and real estate encumbrances in the name of the future cathedral and its institutions of learning.

The next step was a matter working out the details of the foundation’s constitution. What interests this project is the defining of the cathedral’s mission. For from the beginning, the concept of a national cathedral mattered. At the 1893 General Convention, Bishop Paret argued that “in the city of Washington God has given us national opportunities and national responsibilities” (Brent C. H., 1916, pp. 169-170) and that the Episcopal Church ought to have a

29 WNC is now registered as a non-profit organization as designated by a 501(c)3 IRS code.
visible national presence there as so many other denominations had already. Adding that it was the Church’s “sacred duty” to also be in Washington, D.C., Paret announced that the diocese of Maryland ought to be divided and the diocese of Washington created, with its own bishop. Further, McKim argued the case that the Episcopal Church modeled the requisite qualifications to answer the call of a national religious center. He claimed that, after all, the Church mirrored those aspects of the American people that made America truly special: “so scriptural, so reasonable, so broad, so tolerant, so practical in its genius” (Hewlett, 2007, p. 55). The equation of a people so reasonable, broad, tolerant, and practical with a faith that also embraced reason, acceptance, tolerance, and practicality, for Paret, McKim, and Douglas, inevitably and inexorably led to a magnificent cathedral built in the heart of this nation of reason and practicality. These arguments were important because there was at the same time a giant push by Roman Catholics to form a national sense of Catholicism amid the diaspora of Catholic immigrants pouring into the nation (Tweed, 2011). This is reflected in the rhetoric of justification arguments for the cathedral and the reason for the term “Protestant Episcopal” in the cathedral’s foundation name. A cathedral, after all, is the episcopal see of a bishop and holds the bishop’s seat, or throne. Only those Christian denominations that recognize the episcopate, or holds an episcopal hierarchy, have cathedrals, with the two most common being the Catholic and Anglican faiths. The differences between the two faith traditions become a point of contention for the newly created PECF in the justification rhetoric that quickly heats up in the efforts to raise funds for the cathedral idea.

The Protestant Episcopal Cathedral Foundation (PECF) followed the early parochialism of the Episcopal Church in that it allowed not only for the establishment of many smaller church
parishes, but also for those smaller parishes to retain significant internal power. What the PECF provided on the national level was executive power that worked for the Church as a whole. Most importantly, as the work predominantly of the Rev. Douglas, the PECF Constitution settled on the name of the forthcoming cathedral. Douglas wrote to Paret late in 1893,

I have thought much about it & prefer ‘The Cathedral of St. Peter and St. Paul.’ The Next best wd. be ‘St. Paul’s.’ But I want to proclaim to the Romanists that we allow them no monopoly of S. Peter, while at the same time it wd. be striking to have also proclaimed our kindred with the English Church whose London Cathedral is St. Paul’s. And so, the name was effectively settled based on the reasoning that the U.S. should not let Rome monopolize Saint Peter’s name and that the new cathedral ought to acknowledge a kindred connection with Great Britain. It seemed a practical idea and was immediately accepted apparently by all as there is no extant evidence of any discussion on the matter.

The dangers of Roman Catholicism were loudly proclaimed by many non-Catholics at the turn of the last century. Josiah Strong, a Congregationalist minister from Ohio, wrote in *Our Country: Its Possible Future and Present Crisis* (1885) of the horrifying dangers of Romanism (Griffith, 2008) in its direct philosophical opposition to the revered American policy of strict separation of church and state, a dictum now dearly embraced. By the time Josiah Strong writes of the problems inherent in the Romish threat, he notes that the Roman Catholic population west of the Continental Divide overwhelmingly swallowed all Evangelical churches in the nation (Griffith, 2008). Strong’s book reflected the concerns of “white Anglo-Saxon Protestants” in light of growing Catholic presence (Griffith, 2008, p. 366). Besides the concern

---

30 Notes in Regard to Cathedral Organization, circa 1911. WNC, ChA: rg. 110, b. 1.
31 Douglas to Paret, 7 December 1893. WNC, ChA: j. 110, b. 1, f. 8.
of popish allegiance, the sheer rate of growth of Catholics remained a real concern. Between 1800 and 1880 the growth of Roman Catholic population expanded in greater numbers than all Protestant church populations together (Griffith, 2008; Beal, 2008; Herberg, 1960). The beginnings of a pluralistic nation looked scary to those who arrived first, especially those wealthy and aristocrats, such as the Satterlee’s of New York. As William Hutchinson claims in his book, Religious Pluralism in America, “social critics worry about a moral pluralism that they think signals a dangerous loss of consensus in the society” (Hutchinson, 2003, p. 1). The pluralism of Protestantism had oftentimes been contentious, but the massive rise of Catholicism seemed threatening to the very national identity.

The legitimacy of having a Congressional charter forming the cathedral foundation is quickly adopted and used consistently in Cathedral rhetoric, at least until very recently. Dropped is the explanation that the charter simply served as the means for the PECF to establish itself as a non-profit organization with the ability to incur debt and assume property. George Washington’s intentions and Congress’ legal blessings, however, serve as the first means of establishing a legitimate national identity.

The need for a national presence, the creation of the PECF, the election of the new bishop of the new diocese of Washington, and the effective name of the new cathedral all came together in 1895 as the seed for the idea of a national cathedral was placed firmly in the ground.
CHAPTER 3: INCEPTION—SATTERLEE’S IDEOLOGY

“The more complete and irrevocable therefore, the divorce between Church and State becomes, the greater will grow the freedom of the Church in accomplishing those very ends in the reform of social and political life that every patriotic Christian desires”

~Henry Y. Satterlee

Bishop Henry Yates Satterlee’s life is well-documented in Charles Brent’s A Master Builder. This project does not mean to restate what has already been well-written about the Episcopal Church and Satterlee, but does mean to extract certain facets of life that shaped the first bishop of Washington that had direct impact on the idea of WNC. First, he was born into the elite strata of society. His paternal family name is mentioned in the Domesday Book (c. 1086 A.D.) and his American branch of the family descended from an emigrant ancestor who arrived in 1685. On his maternal side, Satterlee’s great-grandfather was a Colonel Quartermaster in the American Revolutionary War. His ancestry included Governors, artists, ministers, and mercantile entrepreneurs. His father, being independently wealthy, did not ever have an occupation, as such, but was an aficionado of art. Satterlee’s youth was spent split between the idealic mansion of his grandfather in Albany and a family home in New York City. At the age of sixteen years, he and his parents and a sister took a nine-month tour of Europe. Because of his father’s interest in art, Satterlee’s European trip also focused on art. After graduating from Columbia University, Satterlee still had no clear direction for a vocation. Denied an officer entrance into West Point just prior to the Civil War, he was encouraged into the ministry.

For Satterlee, whose childhood only minimally contained religion as such, the ministry as a profession was unformed by denominationalism. Although his mother rented a pew in Calvary Church in Gramercy Park in New York City and went every Sunday afternoon to services, neither Satterlee nor any of his siblings were confirmed into the Episcopal faith. But because of his family association with Calvary Church, Satterlee was encouraged to seek the ministry in the Episcopal faith. Just as the nation settled into the Civil War, in 1863 Satterlee went to seminary.

Satterlee grew up, was educated, and gained his ministerial training in the midst of the socially and economically powerful elite of the rapidly growing industrialized nation. He grew up moving in those circles, and although he always lived according to his vocation, he was comfortable rubbing elbows with the wealthy and powerful of the nation and he knew these people personally.

The economic, political, and religious America in which Satterlee grew into his ministerial profession profoundly affected how Satterlee came to view the role of WNC, especially its national character. The depression of 1893 was the worst so far in American history with unemployment over ten percent for six years (Whitten, 2010). Coming on the heels of the depression of 1873, this depression was accompanied by violent strikes, closed banks, populism, labor disputes, massive immigration of the poorer Eastern European countries, women’s suffrage, and the gold versus silver based monetary system (Wiebe R. H., 1967). Discovery of oil in 1859 led to Rockefeller’s Standard Oil Trust that dominated the world’s oil markets and oil refineries. Oil fueled Henry Ford’s horseless carriages which first appeared in 1892. Chicago hosted the world’s first car race in 1896 and by 1906 Ford built his first automobile plant.
Roads and travel changed again the concept of a contiguous United States as more and more people left long-time homesteads to travel toward new destinies and opportunities. Electricity and telephones began to become standard in new buildings. Radio and moving pictures were in their infancy, but that only proved their probability, possibility, and inevitability. By 1900, the Wright brothers were exploring the physics of flight and experimenting with gliders. Elisha Otis’ elevator invention of 1852 allowed for taller buildings located in large industrial cities of New York and Chicago.

The great depression of 1893 changed the political climate away from Democratic policies toward those of the Republican Party. William McKinley ran against William Jennings Bryan in 1896 and handily defeated Bryant. McKinley’s platform emphasized import tariffs as a means to stimulate the economy and employment, a gold standard, acquisition of Hawaii, the Panama Canal, expanding the Navy, limiting immigration against illiterate immigrants, and equal pay for women. McKinley believed that foreign markets were key to national prosperity (American President: A reference resource; William McKinley, 2012). Forced to war against Spain over Cuba, in less than one hundred days, the United States, the Navy led by George Dewey, and the Calvary led by Theodore Roosevelt, won against Spain, and in doing so allowed Cuba its independence (albeit with U. S. protection) and gained the territories of Guam, Puerto Rico, and the Philippines. This war ended being one of Satterlee’s major catalysts in getting WNC ground in the public eye.

McKinley is not known for his liberal race relations policies. In fact, he generally turned a blind eye in spite of his rhetoric against lynching in his inaugural address in 1896. Politics still was the stronghold of the white man, as it remained for decades afterward, but the actions
against the Negro in the South were blatant enough to reach the need for McKinley’s rhetoric. The last decade of the 1890s saw every Southern state pass Jim Crow laws which led to an exodus of Negros to the North in search of equity and greater opportunity. Not that they found it there, but the movement of Negros out of the South reflects the frustrations they felt, bringing their stories to the national front. From this, Satterlee felt strongly about enfolding the Negro into the normative fabric of American life. In fact, Satterlee’s second of four determining factors in accepting the bishopric of Washington was “the solution of the problem how to Christianize the colored people” (Hewlett, 2007, p. 87).

Not that the Negro migration was the only factor for Satterlee’s concern. Between 1880 and 1920 over 20 million immigrants entered the United States. Ellis Island opened in 1892 and by 1900 processed between 5,000 to 10,000 people every day (Ellis Island, 2012). Whereas past immigration stemmed mainly from northern and western Europe, the massive numbers by the turn of the century represented immigrants from southern and eastern Europe, along with Syrians, Turks, and Armenians. The Christian Armenian strife and subsequent emigration to the United States of thousands of Armenians was a special cause of Satterlee’s while he was still ministering at Calvary Church in New York City. Immigration was the result of political, economic, and natural upheavals. Russian Jews left Czarist Russia; Poles, Hungarians, Serbs, Slovaks, and Greeks left due to war, drought, famine and religious persecution (Ellis Island, 2012). The impact of immigration played a major role on the character of the United States as well as Satterlee’s understanding of the role of a national church.

Meanwhile, after nearly disappearing altogether from the American scene, the Protestant Episcopal Church (PEC), especially after the Civil War, focused on missionary opera-
tions, and the Civil War made chaplains take their lessons to heart. Additionally, Episcopal seminaries finally came into being in Philadelphia (Philadelphia Divinity School), Cambridge (The Episcopal Theological School), Chicago (Western Theological Seminary), New York (General Theological Seminary), Alexandria (Virginia Theological Seminary), and Minnesota (Seabury Divinity School in Faribault) (Tiffany, 1903, p. 507). Seminaries for the Negro were built in Tennessee, Washington, D.C., Raleigh, N.C., and Petersburg, VA. Building institutional colleges and universities became an obsession for various denominations during this time. Although PEC founded several smaller colleges, they often were not endowed and soon devolved into non-religious schools. Especially important for the various faiths was the desire to build collegiate schools in the nation’s capital. There was a sense of urgency in the various religious faith claims being made in Washington, D.C.

Most profoundly, of course, were the various academic break-outs from traditional scholarship. Increased scholarly (as opposed to opportunistic and exploratory) expeditions, especially geographic, forced a new understanding of not only the planet, but also with the writings of Charles Darwin, the understanding of man on earth. The profound implications of Darwin’s theses on the origin and descent of man included a third “Great Awakening” just after the Civil War that led directly to Fundamentalism and Social Gospel; and these two led to effects on public policy (Darsey & Ritter, 2009). As the reasonable, broad, tolerant, and practical church, the PEC did not engage in the rampant evolution wars between the seemingly different truths of the Bible and science; although the Social Gospel made a strong impact on Satterlee. Instead, the PEC focused more on internal growth through the generation of seminaries and educational opportunities, along with missionary work both nationally and internationally.
Sending missionaries to China, Haiti, Africa, Armenia, and Mexico, Episcopalian clergy quietly focused their energies toward evangelism. Additionally, the Episcopal Church chose to invest in benevolent societies as outreach for the poor, children (especially the orphaned from the Civil War), the aged and infirm, the young men and women who were influenced by the great sins of the modern world, the American Indian, and women’s auxiliaries that supported and taught women economic skills to prevent and ameliorate poverty (Tiffany, 1903).

By the time Satterlee came to the forefront as bishop of Washington, the PEC, at least on the East Coast, had increased its fold considerably and Satterlee’s philosophies of religion and the world were the result of this tremendous growth and national upheaval beginning to redefine American culture. Satterlee brought certain arguments to Washington with him in 1895 and his priorities were carefully drawn around only a few points. First, just before his election as bishop of Washington, Satterlee published a rather large book, *A Creedless Gospel and the Gospel Creed*, explaining why despite Social Gospel’s good intent; the philosophy fell short of its mark. Second, he affirmed a four-factor belief of what a national church ought to prioritize. And finally, he felt strongly that women were the primary instigators of the next generation’s understanding of faith and religion and therefore, needed much stronger support from the church. With these beliefs myopically focused, Satterlee began his work to build a national cathedral.

At Satterlee’s bishopric consecration, the bishop of Central New York, Dr. Huntington delicately, but forcefully, stated that,

> A state religion in the United States, native or imported, could only be created after a subversion of the whole system of both government and manners...What is wanted is
not an American Christianity but a Christian America...Washington is not to be a Jeru-
lem or a Rome. Let it be a city set spiritually on high, to which all the land may look,
praising God above the Seven Hills of Zion (Brent C. H., 1916, p. 175).

Not quite a city upon a hill, as John Winthrop so eloquently proffered, Dr. Huntington plainly
offered a strong ideology for what a national cathedral means to be—not a house of transpa-
rent glass meant to unveil hypocrisy and wrongdoing, but a beacon that reveals the good works
of the Christian faith. It is important to keep the difference in mind because although the PEC
was not engaging in the debates of evolution or science then in vogue, it was very much en-
gaged in debates of the purpose of the Christian church as different from the Roman Catholic
Church. Dissolution of the Holy Roman Empire in 1806 at the end of the Napoleonic Wars
meant that there was a certain justification, internationally, for the separation of church and
state. The theology of *libera chiesa in libero stato* was thoroughly ingrained in Satterlee’s own
philosophy.

Soon after ratification of both the American and Protestant Episcopal constitutions in
1789, a restorationist movement began that questioned the mission of the church and desired
to restore the church to the originality of the early church after Jesus Christ’s resurrection.
Called primitivism, the desire to undo centuries of Roman Catholic distortions was strong be-
cause by this restoring the “real” Christianity could be revealed and renewed (Holmes, 1988).
This restorative movement echoed strongly in the PEC and this primitive ideology, of going back

33 Italian translated as “Free church in a free state.” This term was coined by Camilio Paolo Filippo Biulio Benso,
Count of Cavour, the only Prime Minister of Italy. He began the fight for Italian unification and separation from the
Vatican. Cavour believed that church and state “were to move, each in its own orbit, to react on each other for
mutual improvement, and, where occasion offered, to co-operate in forwarding the well-being of humanity”
to the Apostle’s Creed as the basis of the Christian faith, was the impetus of Satterlee’s tome already mentioned.

The force of primitivism as the defining of a national church can be seen in Satterlee’s First Diocesan Convention in 1896. He proclaimed the absolute need to enforce the separation of church and state so that the church can do

Christ’s work in Christ’s own way: The power that Christ promised His disciples before Pentecost was power from on high, energy to do the will of God; while the power upon which all human government rests is an authority below to do the will of man, and to obey that voice of the people which sometimes coincides, sometimes conflicts, with the will of God. Under such circumstances there could be no partnership between the Kingdom of Christ and the Roman Empire. The only point of contact between the two was through each individual man, who was, at once, a citizen of the State and a citizen of the Kingdom of Heaven...If the State cannot consent to any alliance with the Church, the Church cannot afford to receive any favors from the State, that will muzzle her mouth and trammel the liberty of the Sons of God...Suffice it to say that the Church of Christ in these United States has opportunities before her for doing Christ’s own work in Christ’s own way (Brent C. H., 1916, pp. 183-184).

The national cathedral, to Satterlee, when built was to remain forever a free church, separate from the national government.

This separation from state encumbrance made the church free. Remembering Huntington’s declaration that what is wanted is not an American form of Christianity, but for Americans to live a Christian life, Satterlee’s adamancy that the roles each played, for both church and
government, are different despite their relatedness in the welfare of humankind. This is clearly shown in Satterlee’s *Private Record* that states his four factors determining his decision to accept the bishopric of Washington. Satterlee first states that he believes in the separation of church and state, and only by this separation can the cathedral church create its own identity in Washington, D.C. His second consideration was the need to minister to the Negro population. The third consideration was his adherence to the primitive church “in such a way that it would promote the cause of American Christian and Church unity by combining all the true elements of Catholic and Protestant life.” And finally, the cathedral must stand as a witness bearer (Hewlett, 2007, p. 87). Satterlee’s understanding of what made this cathedral *national* is not yet revealed; we only know at this point that it was separate from the government in every way.

Satterlee’s job as bishop of Washington had only one point—build a cathedral. As it turned out, neither Miss Mann’s intended land donation nor Mr. Goldsborough’s proposed land donation were accepted for the cathedral. Satterlee had his eyes set on the St. Alban hill that the Rev. Nourse had so lovingly coveted for a glorious cathedral. Once the land was procured, at great cost to Satterlee personally, he set about a course of nationalizing the cathedral.

### 3.1 Where Matters: The Fight for St. Alban’s Hill

If Satterlee was going to make this national cathedral a reality that began with him, he decided to attend to it with an eye toward a defined image. As he first landed in Washington, D.C. to survey what he inherited, he found the proffered land from Goldsborough completely inadequate. First, half the land, which was only eighteen acres in total, included a steep hill. That hill sloped away from Washington rather than toward, and the land was not situated along
a major road, but was set in a small neighborhood. Disappointed, Satterlee visited the Mt. Alban site that sat alongside the small church of St. Alban’s, the one mentioned previously for which the granddaughter of Rev. Nourse left forty gold dollars to begin a “free church.” This site inspired Satterlee.

Frustratingly, for Satterlee, the land had been purchased a mere two weeks earlier. By this time, around 1897, the PECF Board of Trustees were also frustrated and generally tired of assuming the financial and legal debt associated with the church project, and many wanted to just resign the whole idea and walk away. In desperation, Satterlee saw the glory in advice coming from a certain Senator Edmunds, possibly George F., to ask the bishops for help with fundraising and land purchasing. Satterlee laments that Edmunds is apparently unaware of the provincial nature of the Episcopal Church. He states, “The Roman Church in the United States is a unit. It will sacrifice local objects for national objects. The Methodist Church is national rather than local. But the Episcopal Church, which makes so much of the parish and the diocese, sees nothing beyond the parish and diocese” (Hewlett, 2007, pp. 93-94). Further, what the Episcopal Church so desperately needs, to Satterlee’s mind, is “a greater spirit of national unity and organization” (Hewlett, 2007, p. 94). From here his conception of the national cathedral begins to form in earnest.

Satterlee began to negotiate with the current Mt. Alban’s buyer to purchase the land, which was no simple ordeal because the man had no desire to sell. Satterlee’s arguments for selling the land settled into Mr. Barber’s (the owner) mind, who then asked for an exorbitant price—$224,000—and gave a fixed amount of time for acceptance of the offer. The time expired before Satterlee gained permission from the Board. Meanwhile, as life continued outside
of Satterlee’s vision, President McKinley was expected to give a speech the day after Easter 1898 regarding the blowing up the “Maine” in Havana Harbor on February 15. This Easter message implied a state of either impending war or continued peace, a situation that Satterlee seriously considered only as it mattered to his fundraising. He remembers a lady, Mrs. William Belden Noble, remarking to him on this occasion, “Why is there no prophet, no Savonarola, today to go to the halls of Congress to stay this war, to prevent bloodshed, to deliver God’s own message of peace?” (Hewlett, 2007, p. 96). The inspiration of this comment bent his mind further toward forming the function and purpose of a national cathedral. Admitting that Mrs. Noble’s comment and its implication entered his brain without cessation, Satterlee increased his efforts to find a way to justify to the PECF Board the expense of buying Mt. Alban’s for the cathedral.

Naturally, in accordance with Murphy’s Law, providence did not help Satterlee because the next time he approached Mr. Barber, the man raised the price to $250,000. Wanting this land and knowing that this land was meant to be the site of the future cathedral, Satterlee successfully argued the PECF Board for the land. That agreement and subsequent signing meant that Satterlee, who signed the note, would be irrevocably connected to this project for years to come. He reveals in his Private Record that after the Board agreed to purchase the land he realized that he had essentially mortgaged his life to the church for $145,000 (he subtracted the down payment) and he felt overwhelmed. But then his mind switched gears, and he thought

\[34\] Girolamo Savanarola (1452-1498) was an Italian Dominican friar who preached of civic piety and glory. He is known for his opposition to the rule of the Medici’s and helping Charles VIII enter northern Italy. His preaching inspired one of the most famous of the Bonfires of the Vanities in 1497, wherein people destroyed material objects that are likely to lead to sin, such as mirrors, gaming cards, excessive jewelry, cosmetics, and even art. He was excommunicated in 1497 and executed in 1498 for heresy when he declared he could perform miracles. He was hanged, along with two other friars, and then burned so that people could claim relics of his bones. Why Mrs. Noble would refer to Savanarola in this instance is unknown.
less provincially and more nationally. He thought of Admiral Dewey in Manila, and how “for the sake of the country he had taken his life in his hands, and how, if he had been beaten at Manila, there was absolutely nowhere for his fleet to go; how they would be portless, coalless, homeless, disabled” (Hewlett, 2007, p. 96). Satterlee, at that point, felt that if Dewey could do this, take that gamble, put it all in God’s hands, in the name of the country, then so could Satterlee—except, of course, the gamble ultimately was not so much in the name of God as for the country and the Church.

And so, in Satterlee’s words, “the Cathedral land was bought.” Washington Cathedral, as Satterlee referred to it, had a future home. This was not just any home, but a home on the outskirts of The District on a hill overlooking The Mall and the seat of government. Now Satterlee began to work on the physicality of his beloved cathedral.

3.2 The Idea Matters: The Peace Cross Dedication

At the end of the Spanish-American war, in 1898, Satterlee decided to erect a Cross of Peace and as providence would have it, the end of the war coincided with the 1898 General Convention being held in Washington, D. C. (Feller & Fishwick, 1965).

Bishop Satterlee wrote in his Private Record that on the Sunday after the land purchase for the cathedral, Sunday, September 11, 1898, he formed the idea of the Peace Cross as the first monument built on the cathedral grounds (Hewlett, 2007; Brent C. H., 1916). He envisioned the inscription, “That it may please Thee to give all nations unity, peace and concord; we beseech Thee to hear, Good Lord!,” as a sort of revelation that the United States was truly be-
coming God’s new kingdom (Hewlett, 2007, p. 100). Wanting the nation to remain peaceful, but understanding McKinley’s political constraints, Satterlee wrote in the *Diocesan Journal*, that “Indeed, it may be that, in God’s Providence, our nation, in all this, is an instrument, in His hands, for hastening the day when that prayer of the ages shall be answered: ‘Thy Kingdom come, Thy Will be done on earth as it is in Heaven’” (Brent C. H., 1916, p. 222). Following the peace treaty with Spain, Satterlee settled on the Peace Cross as a way to “nationalize the locality [of WNC], and spiritualize the triumph of arms [of American triumph in war] (Brent C. H., 1916, p. 226). He wrote to the wife of one of the Foundation board members, “This war has been really a war for peace, and peace has come in answer to thousands of Christian prayers…Now I am in hope that we can have a simple cross of the Iona Type…where it will stand for centuries as an object of ever increasing interest and historic value” (Brent C. H., 1916, p. 227) (See Appendix C).

Inviting the president to the unveiling threatened to prove a disappointment because although McKinley was happy to be there, he refused to speak to the occasion. Satterlee was sorely disappointed and, in front of the entire gathering, appealed one last time to the President that, “This Cathedral is to last through the centuries. One word from the President, if it were only a ‘God bless this undertaking,’ would make the occasion historic” (Hewlett, 2007, p. 102). In the end, no doubt in response to being put on the spot by Satterlee, McKinley did speak to the historical moment with a brief three sentence speech:

---

35 This is a prayer taken from “The Great Litany” in *The Book of Common Prayer*, p. 148-155. The Great Litany is a series of prayers, considered the first prayers written in English (not translated from another language) for use in public worship, said most frequently during Lent due to its penitential nature.
I appreciate the very great privilege extended to me of participating with this ancient
church, through its bishops and laymen, in this new sowing for the Master and for man.
Every undertaking like this, for the promotion of religion, morality and education, is a
distinct and positive gain to citizenship, to country and to civilization. For this sacred en-
terprise, through you, its originators and promoters, I wish the highest influence and the
widest usefulness, both in the immediate present and in all the years to come (Satterlee
H. Y., 1899, p. 18).

Satterlee thus began the defining of the cathedral as national in the sense that he brought the
history of the nation to intermix with the cathedral. Begun as the attempt to bring national uni-
ty to the Episcopal faith, WNC now had an identity with greater depth. This additional layer of
the meaning of “national” meant that Satterlee could now claim the Cathedral as belonging to
“the people.” This meant that the ritual was not merely the dedication ceremony of a peace
cross on land dedicated to the building of a cathedral; to make the transformation of this na-
tional cathedral identity complete, Satterlee needed to blend the beginning of America’s reli-
gious history into the beginning of the cathedral’s history. He, therefore, preceded the cere-
mony by taking the initiative to make a “pilgrimage” to Jamestown, “where we[Satterlee and a
retinue of bishops attending the General Convention] were brought face to face with the past,
and with the beginnings of the church in America” (Satterlee H. Y., The Peace Cross Book, 1899,
p. 17). Meant to “prepare all minds for the Peace Cross service,” the pilgrimage to Jamestown
symbolized the inevitable connection between the founding of the nation with its direct reli-
ance of the church on the King of England and the founding of a new religious ideal in complete
control of its own destiny sans government beneficence or interference. The Peace Cross cer-
emony, with the blessing of God and President, and with the preceding pilgrimage, meant that it would be truly fitting to consider the new cathedral as national.

3.3 Why Matters: Satterlee’s Fundraising Efforts

Building a cathedral from scratch requires enormous energy and dedication. Knowing that he could not possibly live long enough to see the thing built, Satterlee ever kept the vision of this grand ideal at the forefront of his efforts. Strongly affirming the ideal of separation of church and state, he adamantly refused to confuse the identity of a national cathedral with any aspect of the government other than the friendship between members of the government and members of the church. What he saw as the national identity was the association of the nation as an ideal and the church as an ideal—both separate from the government. The cathedral could never be encumbered by either governmental finances or governmental people. The cathedral would never accept money from the government and because of this the cathedral would never be beholden to act in any way outside its own mission at the behest of any government representative. As a free church, this naturally meant that Satterlee had to raise funds to first pay for the land and then to begin the building process.

Satterlee began by publishing the Peace Cross Book and by establishing Founder’s Certificates that recognized donations of $1 for five square feet of cathedral land. When these ideas produced precious few donations, Satterlee went on speaking tours wherein he spoke at homes and parishes of the wealthy of Washington, D.C., New York, Philadelphia, and Boston. These parishes represent the original socio-economic strata from which Satterlee hailed. The East coast wealthy were doubly hit by the Church for precious financial resources building both WNC and St. John the Divine in New York City. However, these speaking engagements brought
Satterlee’s vision of a national cathedral into ever sharper focus because in order to grasp the promises of donations Satterlee had to rhetorically differentiate between the two cathedrals. His *Private Record* does not specify where he began his speech tours, but he first mentions going to private homes rather than churches, beginning in Philadelphia. He paid fifty one calls in Philadelphia during the month of November 1899.

The first sermon he mentions preaching regarding “a National Cathedral” is before the congregation of Trinity Church in New York City on January 28, 1900 (Hewlett, 2007). This sermon was published in the *New York Times*, as frequently happened at that time. Looking at how Bishop Satterlee used the pulpit as a means of promoting a Protestant national identity, even though he would say that creating a national Protestant identity was not part of his agenda,³⁶ stands to tell us just how serious the battle for souls, both spiritually and financially, was.

Bishop Satterlee traveled the Northeastern states speaking, or preaching as he notes in his journal, in support and justification of a national cathedral and the inevitable requisite fundraising (Hewlet, 2007). Satterlee’s journal is full of records of donations for the cathedral. This act, or art, of fundraising defined Satterlee’s rhetoric as the first Bishop of Washington. A cathedral, after all, is not just any building or any church. A cathedral is an exceptional building and an exceptional church. Satterlee had to make the case to his audience, generally wealthy parishioners of competing parishes, dioceses, churches and cathedrals, justifying his request for fundraising committees in strategic regional dioceses.

³⁶Although Bishop Satterlee did not write out any of his sermons after he became Bishop due to lack of time and only spoke from notes (Hewlet, 2007), he did write one thesis, *The Building of a Cathedral* (1901), which affirmed his conviction that a cathedral stands as a prophetic reminder of “the coming day of Christ, when God shall create a new heaven and a new earth, and when the social bond of brotherhood in Christ shall be fully revealed in that city of God, the new Jerusalem which cometh down from God out of heaven” (p. x). He repeatedly stresses that there was a responsibility to promote Christianity in a purer form, but not necessarily Protestantism.
Although the current mission statement, taken from the Washington National Cathedral (WNC) website, says it speaks for a “generous-spirited Christianity and a catalyst for reconciliation and interfaith dialogue” (Mission, 2009), the original mission was more specific. Speaking before this congregation at Trinity Church (New York) in 1900, Bishop Satterlee insisted that the time had come for the Episcopal Church to give “witness before the whole country of Christian unity with an Anglican basis” (For national cathedral, 1900, ¶ 2, Appendix D). He claims the suitability of the Episcopal Church for this purpose because “it combines in itself Protestant and Catholic tendencies” (For national cathedral, ¶ 4). In other words, the Episcopal Church was a middle road between two perceived extremes of Christian dogma. Catherine Albanese, Religious Studies scholar, advises us to understand the boundary aspect of religion. Social, territorial, and temporal boundaries are places infused with religious significance (Albanese, 1999). Who belongs, where they belong, and when they belong all serve as markers dividing an identified outsider from an insider. The strong insider/outsider rhetoric of religious discourse reveals how power and status are constructed as well as serves as a means to disseminate national values (Moore, 1982). To make his case, Bishop Satterlee needed his audience to identify with a known narrative that not only made complete logical sense, he also had to appeal to the need to be one of the insiders associated with benefitting the correct cause.

Satterlee began his ministerial and clerical career in New York City at one of the larger and more affluent parishes. He spearheaded an active parish, inspiring leadership in one of the most difficult age groups, the twenty- and thirty-year old males (Hewlet, 2007). The location of Satterlee’s defining parish, Calvary Church located at Gramercy Park, was instrumental in keeping Satterlee’s faith theologically grounded. Here Satterlee daily encountered the impacts of
late nineteenth century capitalism—the horrible living conditions of the urban poor, the lack of social, medical, and educational services, the decline of moral standards in the face of desperation and accessibility of vice, and political corruption. Satterlee fought the then current scientific vogue of “Social Gospel,” arguing against the implication that sociology, not religion, was the answer to social problems (Hewlet, 2007). Satterlee firmly believed in God as salvation, not only on the individual level, but also at the social level (Satterlee H. Y., 1895; Brent C. H., 1916). He worked tirelessly to prove his religious faith, which was not easy at this time in the face of such complete and rapid social change due to immigration, industry, and scientific change.

Immigration by the millions from all over Europe brought every kind of language, dialect, religious philosophy, skill, and educational level imaginable. Each new wave of immigrants pushed the previous wave higher in social status in a way never before experienced (Herberg, 1960). Rapid social mobility naturally lent to a need to quickly identify as American. At first, new immigrants found themselves attempting to re-establish their homeland churches since the church had been the center of life and the means to community (Herberg, 1960; Wiebe R. H., 1967). These immigrants had no or little concept of national belonging other than to say they were Germans or Italians, etc., because “it had not been that way [in their homeland]; the new form of identification and self-identification had been the product of American reality and American experience, and represented the first fruits of their Americanization” (Herberg, 1960, p. 14). Herberg’s thesis is that successive generations tended to quickly shed their ethnic-ness of language and cultural ways, but mostly retained identification with

37 Satterlee writes in his thesis, The Building of a Cathedral, “The temper of the age is sociological rather than theological. Men think that it is more important to have right ideas about humanity than to have right ideas about God; and argue that, however beautiful and devotional in sentiment the theological side of Christianity may be, different men will always have different opinions regarding God, while they have no question at all about a practical religion which teaches the brotherhood of Man” (p. 37).
their past through religion. This identification with “American,” as both Burke and Fisher
would remind us, is “the operative principle of narrative rationality” (Fisher W. R., 1984, p.
248). The people to whom Satterlee pleas for Cathedral money must see themselves as partic-
pipators in a truly American and Godly enterprise, rising above old nationalisms. Also important
to Satterlee is to point to the necessity of this cathedral in the Capital City.

As for building a Gothic cathedral, the economic excesses of the gilded age had almost
come to an end by the late-1890s when Satterlee was stumping for the Washington Cathedral.
Bishop Satterlee does not directly mention architectural style in his Private Record, but the
Foundation Trustees spent considerable time before he arrived in Washington arguing for the
Renaissance style over the Gothic (Hewlet, 2007). Either way, the cost of building a cathedral
was going to be enormous and this was no small concern since the country was just coming out
of a strong economic depression. Satterlee seemed to accept the natural assumption of his
wealthy patrician background to garner financial support to build the cathedral. He had in his
background associations of men in the church who advocated the “High-Church” ideal of ca-
thedral (Hewlet, 2007). He had, therefore, been exposed to not only the enthusiastic regard
for the building of cathedrals but also the requisite financial resources (Hewlet, 2007). As long
as Satterlee kept clearly before him his own criteria for the building of a cathedral he was will-
ing to do the work. Generally, the monied of this era were not recent immigrants, but gener-
ationally American. Once he attracted enthusiasm for the cathedral from several wealthy pa-
trons, he asked them to spread the word and enthusiasm among their peers.

Since this one sermon is available, and assuming it is an example of his stump speech or
sermon justifying the cathedral, a brief analysis is warranted because Satterlee’s conception of
what will make the cathedral “national” and why this matters is evident. Bishop Satterlee’s
sermon given at Trinity Church contained five main points, or narratives, in the justification of
building a national Episcopal cathedral (Appendix D). The sermon seems not to be so much a
sermon as a speech, in typical argumentative style, with each point leading to the next and
each point a slightly stronger argument than the one before; perhaps not written in accordance
with Toulmin’s ideal, but neither does the speech offer Biblical or sermonic language. There are
no references to Jesus’ New Testament lessons. Neither St. Peter nor St. Paul makes the cathe-
dral dearer or a moral imperative. However, rival religious actions in Washington, D.C. do cre-
ate a moral imperative for a national cathedral.

Satterlee’s first point, therefore, is that other religious institutions have created major
institutions of higher learning in the nation’s capital in an effort to perpetuate their philos-
ophies. He states that, “While the Roman Catholics have established great Catholic universities,
the Methodists Methodist universities, and the Baptists Columbia University, the Episcopal
Church, the last in the field, moves toward the establishment of a National (sic) cathedral in the
nation’s capital as a witness before the whole country of Christian unity with an Anglican basis”
(For national cathedral, 1900, ¶ 2). This first narrative speaks of the concern that in light of the
Catholics and other Protestant faiths that have gotten their act together enough to build prom-
inent universities—places of proselytizing the nation’s best youth, a point of contention later in
the speech—the Anglican community is lacking. The Episcopalian response is not to enter the
competition by building a great Episcopalian university; rather the response is to build a cathe-
dral, for there are enough institutions of higher learning, and there are enough churches repre-
senting enough denominations in Washington, D.C. What there is not is a place for the “whole
country of Christian unity.”\textsuperscript{38} The singularity of this idea incorporates any minor point Satterlee might make much as Burke writes that “out of the division and the community arises the ‘universal’ rhetorical situation” (Burke K., 1969, p. 146). The universal of this rhetorical situation is the idea of establishing one country united by Christian ideals, while at the same time accepting that there is no one united understanding of those ideals. There is, however, a “better” understanding of how those ideals ought to be publically manifested.

Even if the audience in Trinity Church did not know of the cathedral/university plans, they were aware of the Roman Catholic advances on the nation. Perhaps this is the reason why Satterlee opens his argument with this fact. He laid down the most basic consideration that other Christian denominations have managed to pull themselves into a larger whole in the form of universities. The Roman Catholic Church, as he wrote in his \textit{Personal Record}, “is a unit. It will sacrifice for national objects.” The nature of the Episcopal Church is that its focus remains at the local parish and diocese; it does not have a sense of the national. In a real sense, just for the sake of survival in the great Christian competition for souls, the Episcopal Church needs to gain a spirit of national unity and organization before the denomination is completely swallowed and obliterated by its own inability to think in long-term goals. Point number one then, is that a national cathedral would give the Episcopal Church a greater presence in the nation’s capital and a greater likelihood of survival.

Equally relevant is the bridge the Episcopal Church acts as between the Catholic and Protestant faiths. The 1890 census showed that of those identifying as belonging to a church, 

\textsuperscript{38} Actually, not part of the narrative, but probably known to Satterlee, was that the initial conception for the cathedral was for a cathedral and university (Hewlet, 2007). The plot purchased by the PECF was not large enough for both a cathedral and university, but it was large enough for a cathedral and private secondary institutions along with a small seminary.
Catholics claimed 30% and the combination of Baptists, Methodists, and Presbyterians claimed another 34% of that population, while only 2.5% claimed the Protestant Episcopal Church (Department of Interior, 1894). Satterlee’s point of the bridging ability of the Episcopal Church may even have seemed unlikely at that time to those who considered numbers of souls as the requisite proof of divine appeal; but to those rare few who counted as the nation’s wealthy elite, proof of divine blessing may be more obviously noted in the bank account. Besides, the idea of a national Episcopal institution in the nation’s capital is not a new idea; it was born with the original creation of Washington, D. C., a story he reiterates in his sermon. He stakes a claim on the original plan by L’Enfant.

The second narrative of national heritage began with George Washington and his Federal City architect, Pierre L’Enfant who projected a National Church, a sort of Westminster Abbey, but belonging to no specific denomination (Hewlet, 2007; Washington National Cathedral, 2007; The Episcopal cathedral project, 1895). Not included in the Times rendition of Satterlee’s speech, but certainly relevant, is the fact that George Washington proposed, and Congress passed, a resolution stating that after the presidential inauguration, the President and Congress should attend services before beginning their governmental work (Annals of Congress, 1789). After the newly elected Chancellor of New York administered the Presidential oath of office in the Senate galley and his infamous first inaugural speech was given, General Washington, along with the present members of the Senate and House of Representatives, walked across the

39 “Monday, April 27, 1789: Resolved, That after the oath shall have been administered to the President, he, attended by the Vice President, and members of the Senate, and House of Representatives, proceed to St. Paul’s Chapel, to hear divine service, to be performed by the Chaplain of congress already appointed” (Annals of Congress, 1789, p. 25).

40 “I swear, so help me God” was not in the original oath of office as determined by the assembled Congress. It was added spontaneously by Washington and has remained a part of the oath since by every succeeding President.
street to St. Paul’s (Episcopal) Chapel\textsuperscript{41} to attend the divine service (Annals of Congress, 1789, p. 29). This infamous inheritance from the first inauguration of the United States belongs to the Episcopalians of New York City, especially St. Paul’s Church. This is almost better than Biblical reference to create a real obligation to connect the Protestant Episcopal faith with the founding of the nation. Satterlee, in his promotion of the cathedral, has already pulled in a national narrative when he combined a pilgrimage to Jamestown with the Peace Cross dedication. He now is adding George Washington, L’Enfant, and the very beginnings of the national ideal into his narrative thread.

Later in the speech, he mentions, along with the Peace Cross dedication, that the Rev. Dr. (Thomas John) Claggett was the first bishop of any denomination consecrated on American soil, and it is through Claggett that the apostolic succession of priests is upheld, an important point in the Catholic sense. The intertwining of things American, national, and Episcopal, leads the listener to see the inevitability of this Episcopal cathedral as a National Cathedral.

Yet, there is more than this umbilical connection between the Cathedral and the first inauguration that Satterlee imparts in his speech. Satterlee’s third narrative specifically states that the Episcopal religion inculcates the best medium between the Roman and Calvinist philosophies, while at the same time affirms the policy of separation of church and state as the best way for religion to co-exist with the state in the division of individual and collective power and identity. Arguments against the Roman Catholic Church often mentioned the required allegiance of the Catholic to the pope above the state. Not that any church ought to be a subject

\textsuperscript{41} Completed in 1766, St. Paul’s Chapel is Manhattan’s oldest public building in continuous service and the only still-remaining colonial church (St. Paul’s Chapel). Yes, there is a plaque marking the pew where Washington sat on that day. The chapel also served as a place of rest and refuge for recovery workers at the WTC site after the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001 on the Twin Towers.
of the state, the idea that any American owes allegiance to a foreign power was sharply re-
buked. Yet, there is a sisterhood (brotherhood, if you prefer) between the Episcopal and the
Roman Catholic faiths. Both claim a direct line of priestly consecration going back to the twelve
Apostles. This is Satterlee’s point when he mentions that the Episcopal Church relates to the
“primitive church as it was the first four centuries before Church and States were ever heard of
and before the medieval novelties of Roman Catholicism” (For national cathedral, 1900, ¶ 4).
Although he does not mention any novelties of Protestant practices, there is an understanding
that the Episcopal faith holds commonalities with both faiths.

Satterlee feels quite strongly about the wall of separation between church and state. In
fact, the second paragraph of his *Private Record* states four factors that led Satterlee to accept
the Bishopric of Washington with the first one being his confirmed belief in the separation of
church and state (Hewlet, 2007). He reminds the Trinity congregation that “The Church, to be
free, as the ancient Apostolic work was, must be untrammeled herself by any political infl-
fluence” (For national cathedral, 1900, ¶ 5) and that those preaching from the cathedral “can
boldly rebuke vice and political corruption” (¶ 6). When the people support the cathedral they
can do so knowing there would be no ties to political pressures or obligations. This is a fine
point to make at the turn of the century considering the checkered history of robber barons
and massive political corruption, especially those in New York. One historian describes the time
as one that “offered a peculiarly inviting field for coarse leadership and crudely exercised pow-
er” (Wiebe R. H., 1967, p. 37). The generally inhumane and irresponsible actions of industry
moguls such as John D. Rockefeller, John J. Astor, James Fisk, Jay Gould, and Cornelius Vander-
bilt were well known across the nation. Despite the fact that each of these men’s names could
be found on church rosters, some on Episcopal church rosters, and despite the fact that Satterlee grew up with these men and their sons, Satterlee makes no apology for making this point. Satterlee’s sense of integrity and respect for his ministry gave him the power to speak thusly in the private homes of the wealthy as well as their respective churches. The ability to check the connections of money and state at the door of the church surely must have been a basic requirement for many people. Of course, there is also the sense that wealth is not a direct link to corruption; rather, wealth is a link with hard work and God’s blessings, part of the Calvinist heritage. No doubt, the wealthy patrons to whom Satterlee appeals all believe that their wealth does tremendous good works in their communities. To donate great sums of money to a cathedral residing in Washington, seat of some of the greatest levels of corruption, and being spoken of as a “national cathedral” may be to imply a connection, unless there is an expression otherwise. Satterlee is always careful to make the point clear.

Concerns regarding the inability of Catholics to separate church and state derive from the ongoing belief in the doctrine of papal infalibility. Growth of Catholicism through immigration of the less literate populations of Eastern Europe and Ireland seemed to represent an almost conspiratorial program instigating by the Vatican. Josiah Strong was not the only outspoken voice pointing this out. Anti-Catholicism ran rampant calling lazy Protestants to task in their lackadaisical approach to pluralism. In bringing in this particular narrative, Satterlee ex-

---

42 Strong’s treatise seemed almost mild in comparison to some anti-Catholic diatribe. For example, Robert Seth McAllen published a 500+ page tome of Puerto Rico’s Anti-Catholic reforms. In his Publisher’s Announcement, he wrote, in part, “We beg to say that we have no apologies to make to the Catholic world for bringing out this volume, for if it is not an American duty to throttle and expose Romish cunning and Popish pollution of American institutions and American morals, then we are in the wrong for laying bare the slimy doings of Rome and her benighted cohorts...We are Americans first, last and all the time, and no true American can be a patriot and bow down to an Italian Pontiff, and hold himself in readiness to do his bidding. Every American knows that there is not a single Catholic dignitary but what considers the fundamental principles of the American Government wrong, as
poses a very real concern of the time. He does not explicitly state that the nation is in trouble of falling under Rome’s rule, but there is this underlying tension onto which he has undeniably latched. Although Catholicism is often blamed for inventing guilt, Satterlee does not seem too far estranged from its usefulness. A little paranoia goes a long way. The Catholics did not, at this time, have a national cathedral. Satterlee’s point, implicitly, is that this National Cathedral, unlike the Catholic Church, is not and never would be either answerable to any governmental agency or demanding of any political agenda. This freedom will give, according to Satterlee, far greater power, in the end, to serve as a “great spiritual opportunity” (Satterlee H. Y., 1901, p. 61) and also represents the restoration of the Primitive Church.

Cathedrals don’t build themselves quickly, cheaply, or easily and one small and newly formed diocese should not feel the total responsibility for the expense, therefore, Satterlee taps into the fourth narrative: there is much work to be done to get the cathedral and the education buildings built, and the project relies heavily on the generosity of the nation’s people. Not only was money needed to build the cathedral proper, money was also needed to build the schools. Money would be needed for decades and generations hence. Satterlee finally focuses on building the School for Girls first, even before beginning the cathedral. There are no records showing the reason for the decision to build the school for girls first, but it may be that the

---

they consider that the Pope and the Catholic Church are the rulers of the universe, and secretly make their threats that at no late date in the future Catholicism will rule America...Let us repeat, that we may be assassinated, we may be ushered before our Maker by some treacherous hand who worships the Pope instead of God...but should this happen, we will never lower our colors, and the words “Protestant America” will be inscribed at the top of our banner, and the inscription upon our armor shall be “America for Americans...” (McAllen, 1900).

43 Responsibility for building a church or cathedral resides with the congregations and parishes for whom the church and cathedral seek to serve. In creating the diocese of Washington, there was immediate concern that the diocese and various parishes already residing in the Federal City would compete with the older diocese of Maryland, draining Maryland and already established parish churches of limited resources. Satterlee was careful to promise that the source of funds for a national cathedral must come from the nation’s people rather than the diocese. For this reason, the Cathedral also did not have a parish or congregation of its own; in other words, it was not initially also a church.
school may have been the least expensive way to get the idea started. Bishop Satterlee glowingly notes in his *Personal Record*, and in his speech, that Mrs. Phoebe A. Hearst\(^44\) had been approached before the Bishop was consecrated by a member of the Board of Trustees to donate money to build the school (Hewlet, 2007, p. 92; For national cathedral, 1900, ¶7). Mrs. Hearst almost single-handedly financed the school for girls. Bishop Satterlee does not mention her level of commitment in his sermon/speech; instead he tells the congregation that there is still a substantial debt to be paid before the school opens in the upcoming Fall. Hearst, after all, was not an Episcopalian (she belonged to the Baha’i faith), and yet, her generosity revealed the strength of the need and support for the national cathedral idea.\(^45\) However, concentrating initially on a school for girls was definitely novel. At the turn of the century, despite the continuous arguments and efforts by suffragists such as Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony, females only accounted for nineteen percent of college enrollment (Women's history in America, 1995). For the most part, post-secondary education for females was limited to women’s teaching seminaries and a few women’s universities. Although not a university, and only a primary and secondary school, the idea was to advance the cause of the Episcopalian faith for the wealthy and incoming government families in Washington, D.C.

Being from New York Satterlee had a natural inclination to return there for serious fundraising. New York City was not only a city with more Episcopal churches than any other

---

\(^{44}\) Mrs. Hearst was the wife of Senator George Hearst from California who died in 1891 leaving her his entire estate. Her name is familiar to most not because of her husband, rather because of her only child, William Randolph. However, at the time Mrs. Hearst was quite renowned herself as a suffragist and generous philanthropist.

\(^{45}\) She was, instead, a forward thinking and wealthy woman who believed in the education for girls. Not only did she give a generous donation to the University of California at Berkeley with a considerable endowment to provide scholarship for female students (Phoebe Apperson Hearst, 2013), she also was the first female Regent at UC—Berkeley for over twenty years. She had been, before her marriage to Hearst, a kindergarten teacher. Later in life, she founded the Parent-Teacher Association (Hewlet, 2007).
denomination (Hewlet, 2007), and over 4,000 millionaires (PBS Online, 1999), it was also sensible as the destination for the purpose of raising money for the proper education of young women. Certainly, at this time, the vast majority of women did not go to college or become independent women. As the nurturers of the nation’s future, young women still needed guidance, especially since they were considered so easily swayed by outside influences.

The last point continued with just how easily women are led away from the Episcopal faith by the lack of a proper Episcopalian education. Satterlee related an anecdote of women who confessed they are Roman Catholic simply because they were educated at private Catholic convent schools (For national cathedral, 1900; Satterlee, 1901, ¶ 8). He ended his sermon stating that “when the Episcopal school is built and working [he] hoped never to hear from a woman that she switched her confirmation from the Episcopal Church to the Roman Catholic Church because her education came from a Catholic school rather than an Episcopal one” (For national cathedral, 1900, ¶ 9). There is, for Satterlee, a responsibility of the National Church to ensure that born, baptized, and confirmed Episcopalians remain so throughout their lives. This last narrative referred back to the first—the very real competition with the Roman Catholic Church for possession of the nation’s souls and pocketbooks. As the teachers of the next generation, as the guidance counselors of the nation’s future leaders, and as the repositories of moral transference, educating young women in the Episcopalian tradition became a moral imperative and justification for the national cathedral school. The sense of passing on the values of the Protestant faith as the values of the nation as a whole bleeds throughout Satterlee’s speech.

Satterlee’s fundraising journeys always led to exclusively white and wealthy parishes. He took out advertisements and wrote pamphlets asking the nation’s faithful, of all faiths, to
donate for the building of what he perceived as a national cathedral. But his records only mentioned those large sums from wealthy supporters. He never mentioned whether or not some small African American Episcopal Methodist church donated their hard earned pennies or dollars to the cause. His focus, as he understood it, was to garner vast promises from the nation’s white elites. Certainly, there were Negro millionaires at the turn of the century, yet he never mentioned approaching them for their contributions. At the same time, the second of his four primary factors of accepting the Bishopric was to find the “solution of the problem [of] how to Christianize the colored people” (Hewlet, 2007, p. 87). Hampered as he was by Jim Crow laws, he was very liberal in supporting seminaries to train more African American clergy to serve Black churches (Hewlet, 2007, p. 61). Of course for Satterlee, just like many today who believe in their own liberal and modern philosophies, seeing outside the hegemonic box is difficult. Thinking we are open-minded and accepting, we still make race and class judgments and assumptions. Those boundaries that Albanese wrote of shape us; and the politics of race and class still limit what we can do, even, perhaps especially, within religions.

Assuming that the cathedral was supported wholeheartedly by the Eastern Protestant elite is dangerous because Satterlee was competing with a national narrative with a century-old belief of disestablishment. Even though the rhetoric from the both the New York and U. S. Supreme Courts made claim to a Christian nation, there was by no means this same general acceptance by individuals. An example of this is a letter to the editor of the New York Times in

46 Andrew Carnegie, in a speech before the Philosophical Institution in Edinburgh, Scotland defended the amount of progress Negroes had made in the United States since their Emancipation. In his address, he outlines their literacy rates, population growth, land ownership, and entrepreneurs leading to a definite improvement overall of racial opportunity. He mentions by name five Negro millionaires (Andrew Carnegie on the Negro's progress, 1910).
1897 regarding Satterlee’s advertisements for donations in *The Churchman*. The signed “Protestant” of the letter took umbrage of several points he found in the offending appeal for cathedral monies. First, this writer questions what is meant by the claim that “the cathedral is to be National, and on the broadest grounds of Christian unity.” The second question the writer asks is whether this Episcopal church was going to follow suit of an Episcopal church in Philadelphia that dedicated a portrait to “The Royal Martyr Charles,” an act that was apparently met with broad ecclesiastic approval. The third and final question regarded the need for such a massively ornamental structure as a Gothic cathedral for no matter how lovely, how appealing, how massively built the cathedral is, in the end, the writer attests, no cathedral church is actually built to the “glory of God,’ and [this cathedral] will not in reality contribute one iota to it” (Protestant, 1897). Of course, WNC did not have a dedication to Charles I nor was there ever any intent to have, for Satterlee, always forward thinking, and his successors opted to incorporate Americana into the cathedral rather than devote to a British past. Even so, as Satterlee wrote in his *Private Record*, despite a healthy dose of advertising in three church journals and

---

47 Although the following article does not mention the exact source of the financial appeal, *The Churchman* was the Episcopal journal of the New York Episcopal diocese. Satterlee’s biographer, Rt. Rev. Charles Brent, makes note of Satterlee’s association with *The Churchman* during his tenure as bishop. I am extrapolating from this that the “New York journal” mentioned in the letter from “Protestant” to be this same journal.

48 The writer refers to King Charles I of Scotland and Great Britain who was beheaded in the civil war headed by Oliver Cromwell in 1649. This war became a battle between Anglicanism and Puritanism and Charles I was beheaded when he refused to accede to Cromwell’s demand that he abolish the bishopric in the Church of England, an act he agreed to do for Scotland but not for England. His claim was that, “I conceive that Episcopal government is most consonant to the Word of God, and of an apostolical (sic) institution, as it appears by the Scripture, to have been practised (sic) by the Apostles themselves, and by them committed and derived to particular persons as their substitutes or successors wherein and hath ever since to these last times been exercised by Bishops in all the Churches of Christ, and therefore I cannot in conscience consent to abolish the said government” (Kiefer, 1999). The writer of the letter to the editor referred to Charles I as a tyrant who imprisoned and tortured those who opposed him and who attempted to “reduce Parliament to a nullity” --an interpretation of Charles I by the Whig historian Thomas B. Macaulay, 1st Baron of Macaulay.
the Founder’s Certificates, far more money was spent in the advertising than was donated as a response to the efforts.

In 1904, Satterlee wrote that although the various bishops of the faith had come round to the idea of the national cathedral and although “The Washington Cathedral is now everywhere recognized as belonging to the National Church, ...the time has not arrived when the Church at large feels any responsibility regarding it” (Hewlet, 2007, p. 140). Ironically, Satterlee still needed the Episcopal Church, itself, to feel a responsibility to the cathedral. There obviously existed a protesting and questioning Episcopalian public.

Satterlee finally successfully raised the funds necessary to pay off the mortgage on the land and begin the task of breaking ground for the cathedral. Meanwhile, in addition to raising funds for the building, he also worked to procure the beginning accoutrements of the cathedral. Accordingly, before the foundation stone was laid, Satterlee declared in his diary that his attempts to nationalize the Cathedral were making way. Not only had he raised the money for the land, he raised the money for and erected the Peace Cross, acquired the Glastonbury Cathedral, the equipment for the school, the Jerusalem Altar, [and] the All Hallows’ Gate...[Also] written a Cathedral book and many pamphlets, formed Cathedral committees in Boston, Philadelphia, New York, Newport, Connecticut and Chicago, and arranged for Cathedral open-air services and diocesan retreats” (Feller & Fishwick, 1965, p. 11). It was only the beginning.

3.4 What Kind Matters: Gothic Style, Medieval Architecture

Feller and Fishwick (1965) write that in 1907 there were two major American buildings underway: WNC and the Pennsylvania Station in New York—both massive and designed to last for generations. By 1964, the railroad station was being torn down to make way for a new
building, while the Cathedral was still not completely built. This shows, to Feller and Fishwick, that “technology and traffic change: the word of the Lord endures” (Feller & Fishwick, 1965, p. 26). Cathedrals, as monuments to the glory of God, are always built to last for, not centuries, but millennia.

Architecture for cathedrals is of major concern because cathedrals represent far more than form and function. The discussions regarding architectural style—Renaissance or Gothic—exist in WNC archives, but this project seeks only to explore why the style mattered. Although the first thought was to match the architecture of government buildings already existing in Washington, D.C., the end result was to build a truly medieval Gothic structure. Rowe (1999) uses the publication, *Lex Mundi: A series of studies in the Religion of the Incarnation*, to point out that theologically, cathedrals act as a microcosm of God’s creation of man as well as a metaphor for the universe (Rowe, 1999, p. 11). In this way cathedrals “should stand as the apotheosis of all that is best” (p. 12). What the early planners knew for sure was that modern, contemporary architecture will always soon appear outdated. The discussions to build Classic Revival, or Renaissance, or Gothic lasted for the greater part of five years. The more study the early planners did, the more it became obvious that Gothic was really the only style suited for cathedral building because Gothic architecture, in the end, was developed to “express man’s relationship to his surroundings and his origin” (Harrington, 1979, p. 5). The Cathedral, then, would not match or complement government buildings; instead it would stand out on its own, making its own national statement.

The world, being a bustling and busy place, constantly changing, and always noisy, is not to be a part of WNC. Standing to counteract the effects of the world, and especially the world
of government, through its vaulted ceiling, WNC ushers in the quiet, the still, the magnificent. The only problem for the building committee was in finding a Gothic architect—an American Gothic architect. The decision to choose an American architect, of course, was Satterlee’s because he felt strongly about making WNC an American national cathedral in all ways other than in its actual architecture style. This was no small requirement, especially in light of the fact that Gothic architecture requires masons skilled in medieval Gothic masonry as well as an abundant supply of the right kind of building material. Apparently, although there were architects who had been to Europe to study Gothic architecture, none had the experience of actually building or of being the lead architect for building a Gothic structure as large as a cathedral (Harrington, 1979). Even after the Building Committee hired the best Gothic architect, George Bodley, recommended by the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Committee still insisted that there should be an American co-architect. They felt that “only an American could understand American conditions, American life, and American workmen” (Harrington, 1979, p. 9). As an experienced architect, Bodley wholeheartedly agreed and named an architect who had studied under him before beginning his own practice in Boston, one Henry Vaughan. Sadly, two weeks after laying the foundation stone in late 1907, Bodley suddenly died, leaving Vaughan to assume the helm alone for the next ten years.

Despite the general agreement on architectural style, at least one building committee member felt strongly that the choice of Gothic architecture was in error and should be in the Classical Renaissance tradition because “A great Cathedral founded upon Classic motives will harmonize with the Government buildings [that are part of Washington, D.C.], which cannot be
the case if Gothic architecture is used.” Further, the dissenter considered the Cathedral a government building by virtue of its rhetorical history as derived from L’Enfant’s original plan. This caused Satterlee to once again set about seriously considering what is meant by a national cathedral and how to communicate that vision. Satterlee carefully stressed the vision of the cathedral as a “House of Prayer for All People” and not to associate the cathedral with the government at all other than to say the Cathedral must be different. Truly he felt that Gothic architecture was the best at “promoting devotional feeling and inspiring prayer.” Of course, Satterlee won the rhetorical battle because his vision was devoted to the firm belief in the separation of church and state. Satterlee wanted a national cathedral to emphasize the cathedral as independent of what the government had to offer the people, including art and architecture. WNC is meant to aspire toward heaven, not the government, as well as inspire the people toward the beauty of the American identity.

Always in the forefront of Satterlee’s cathedral vision is the national aspect. That WNC will be as a “Westminster Abbey” in the United States, is part of that vision. The approach to the Cathedral, both literally and figuratively, ought to bespeak a national cathedral that is in touch with the pulse of national life. Alongside the glorious theological detail, Satterlee envisioned the Gothic setting with elements of Americana residing side-by-side with theological. In a letter to architect Bodley, he enumerated his future visions for the Cathedral, including that there be “statues and perhaps bas reliefs presenting different events of American history. You yourself have suggested Washington and Penn. I could add a great many other subjects. Some of them connected with our own Church, like the baptism of Pocahontas, Washington reading

49 Burnham to Satterlee, 25 June 1906. WNC, ChA: j. 162, b. 7, f. 7.
50 Satterlee to Burnham, 27 August 1906. WNC, ChA: j. 162, b. 7, f.7.
the burial service over Gen. Braddock, etc." Placed within and beside the theological, the national character of the Cathedral, in Satterlee’s mind, can only be enhanced by the “uplifting sense of awe” afforded by the Gothic, just as it was almost eight hundred years before when the first Gothic cathedral at St. Denis was built. Those first Gothic designers created a space where “no segment of interior space was allowed to remain in the dark, undefined by light” (Harrington, 1979, p. 7). Certainly, Pocahontas and Washington deserve to live forever embraced by such philosophy.

3.5 Begun Matters: Laying the Foundation Stone

Although his philosophy is evolving, according to his Private Record, Satterlee understood this national cathedral as national in the sense of the Anglican Communion in the United States and, only slightly less firmly, in communion with other Christian faiths. He refers to this communion as the American Church, but mostly as it pertains to Episcopalians. A cathedral, as the bishop’s seat, is meant to “give him a sphere for the exercise of his pastoral office with spiritual opportunities that he cannot have in any parish;” and this centralized manner of office allows the bishop a certain power to direct outward his perception of the Church (Hewlett, 2007, pp. 148-149). Satterlee saw WNC not only as the “Cathedral of the [Washington] Diocese,” but more importantly “of the whole American Church.” Further, he saw WNC as a cathedral that ought to “stand for the Anglican basis of Church unity.” With so fervent a position that Satterlee took regarding the separation of church and state, he also assumed that although he thought the Episcopalian faith to be the epitome of Christianity in its most primitive root, he did not envision WNC as national in the sense as being non-denominational as envisioned by

51 Satterlee to Bodley, 23 April 1907. WNC, ChA: j. 162, b. 7, f. 2.
L’Enfant. In the midst of such intellectual change with respect to Darwinism, Marxism, Social Gospel, Fundamentalism, industrialism, and professional and collegiate specialization, (etc.) the role of WNC, as Satterlee saw it, was one rooted specifically in Anglicanism and having little to do with the politicized world. The work that the Church does is separate from the work of government. Yet, he saw the need to incorporate good relations between the head of government and the head of the Cathedral as if to create the appropriate analogy of the two. For this reason, it seems he felt it imperative that the President not only be invited, but that he appear and that he speak to those important milestones in the building of the Cathedral. This followed logically considering the conception of a semi-religious church by L’Enfant and Washington, the inception signed into being by President Harrison in 1893, and the quickening of WNC by the Peace Cross dedication with President McKinley in 1898. All that was now necessary is the birth blessed by God and President Roosevelt with the laying of the foundation stone.

Still thinking of WNC as national in the sense of the Episcopal Church, but hoping that its very presence would be conducive to the reunification of the various faiths back into the primitive Christian Church as he saw the Episcopal faith as being, Satterlee used the occasion of the General Convention of 1907 to ceremoniously lay the first stone of the cathedral. The years’ convention coincided with the International Convention of the Brotherhood of St. Andrew, meaning that there would be, in Washington, D.C., an international representation of clergy. Although there is no record of the actual number of St. Andrew brothers attending, by one estimate, some 10,000 people attended the laying of the foundation stone, many of whom were

---

52 The Brotherhood of St. Andrew website claims that “The Brotherhood of St. Andrew is a missionary and evangelism ministry of the Episcopal Church and Anglican Communion. In fact, it is the oldest evangelistic ministry of the Episcopal Church. Our goal is to bring men and boys to Jesus Christ.” More can be found at http://www.brotherhoodstandrew.org/.
actually “non-church goers” (Brent C. H., 1916, p. 395). Not only were there fifty-five American diocesan bishops present, but also three bishops of the Church of England, three Canadian bishops, and the Archbishop of the West Indies.

Satterlee chose the Feast of St. Michael and All Angels, September 29, 1907, as the day to lay the foundation stone. The day dawned rainy and muddy, but there was no lack of attendees. Being 1907, some came in their own automobiles, some came in carriages, some came in work wagons, and some came walking—representing the transitional economic world of that time (Hewlett, 2007). In addition to the impressive ecclesiastic dignitary list, sitting on the dais sat the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, cabinet members, the commissioners of the District of Columbia, and representatives of the Diplomatic Corps, Senate, House, Judiciary, and the military services. Of course, President Roosevelt attended along with his wife and two of his children (Brent C. H., 1916, p. 395). I would not place this as so much planning on Satterlee’s part, other than for the President, but would instead consider this turnout to be representative of the public mood of the time. Satterlee does not mention in his Private Record inviting secular dignitaries other than for asking the President to speak to the occasion. No doubt, the PECF sent invitations for the ceremony. Protocol probably placed them on the dais.

The foundation stone was created from American-quarried Indiana granite with an inset of stone taken from the field behind the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem (Hewlett, 2007, p. 156). A foundation stone, rather than a corner stone, was planned for the occasion because, at this time, architectural plans had not actually been agreed upon. Satterlee, however, was anx-

53 Without names it is difficult to determine exactly who the dignitaries were. Hewlett’s book claims an associate justice of the Supreme Court, while Brent’s quotes the Rev. Dr. Huntington claiming there was the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court.
ious to make opportune the occasion that the confluence of the General Convention and the St. Andrew’s Convention presented. Using the coincidence to bring attention, and support, to the cathedral idea is always part of Satterlee’s thinking. Without architectural plans, though, a cornerstone—traditionally the first stone placed in a masonic foundation from which all other stones are referenced—cannot be placed. Even as a foundation stone meant to be placed underneath the cathedral altar, Satterlee could only estimate its placement. In order to justify its placement, Satterlee suggested building a small chapel of the Nativity at the point of the foundation stone (Hewlett, 2007, p. 81). Considering the Bethlehem stone set inside the foundation stone as well as Satterlee’s firm belief in the Gospel of Jesus Christ, building a chapel of the Nativity to set the Cathedral in place makes sense, and the chapel was thus name the Bethlehem Chapel. Keeping in mind Satterlee’s “national” philosophy, it should be remembered that he also placed the Jerusalem stone inside the American granite so that what is American is girded by what is Christian. Satterlee’s genius then ensured that the primitive church lives intimately within the Church in America.

Not worried over exactness on this day, the ceremony ensured that the foundation stone was hammered into place using the same mallet George Washington used to lay the foundation stone of the Capitol building in 1793 (Brent C. H., 1916; Feller & Fishwick, 1965; Hewlett, 2007). Ever keeping in mind the symbolic intertwining of location in the nation’s capital, the symbolism of the Congressional charter, and the continued support of the nation’s presidents in bringing the National Cathedral to life, Satterlee clearly understood the ritual of the foundation stone. The analogy of George Washington using the mallet to set the foundation stone of the Capitol Building to Bishop Satterlee using the same mallet to set the foundation
stone of the National Cathedral is clearly set to mean that the instances of mallet and foundation stones by two founding leaders for two founding institutional buildings are indeed compatible and, perhaps, prophetic. This compatibility of stones, men, and institutions creates a strong relationship between both, one that Satterlee seems to have purposefully cherished and nurtured in his tenure as bishop and carried over by future bishops as well (see Appendix E).

Happily adding to the auspiciousness of the day, Brent (1916) writes that in response to the cloudiness and wetness of the day, “It was noted that during the ceremony an American eagle hovered over the spot high in the heavens, and 'one poetic feeling and simple faith observed that one could almost see the Archangel and his hosts holding back the clouds in answer to the prayers of God’s people’” (Brent C. H., 1916, p. 396). The auspicious omens of the day—the weather clearing just as the foundation stone was hammered into place and the eagle hovering—are necessary components of the narrative of WNC’s birth.

Roosevelt’s address was short but spoke to a subtle move on the definition of national. More than an Anglican communion or a primitive theology, Roosevelt speaks of a faith harmony. He concluded his speech with a premonition of sorts of the role of this cathedral when he said,

There is much evil; there is much good, too; and one of the good things is that more and more we must realize that there is such a thing as a real, Christian fellowship among men of different creeds, and that the real field for rivalry among and between the creeds comes in the rivalry of the endeavor to see which can render best service to mankind, which can do the work of the Lord best by doing His work for the people best (Brent C. H., 1916, p. 398).
There is in his address a challenge for the new cathedral to rise above and go beyond even the vision of Satterlee from Anglican unity to Christian unity to perhaps even a unity more devoted to mankind itself. Still in the midst of a national movement, in Protestant circles of the Social Gospel, Roosevelt (despite his rapacious devotion to capitalism) recognizes here the role of this church as being that national home of the Lord’s good works to address the evils of the world, or at least the nation. The roles of government and the roles of the church, for Roosevelt, are also neatly laid out, separate and complete. The role of the nation’s churches is to alleviate the spiritual and physical deprivations of mankind and in this sense there is unity of the Christian faith despite the many denominations and splinterings. The challenge is not so much in the role of the faith, but rather in the ability of WNC to gather up the differing denominations of Christianity to administer the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Satterlee did not live to rise to the challenge, if he even understood Roosevelt’s words as a challenge, for he died five months later. But the work he began and for which he dedicated the last eleven years of his life had a lasting legacy. He took the cathedral idea he was handed and gave it definition and a real beginning. Likewise, from the cathedral idea he formed a firm mission that is still upheld today. Satterlee’s *Private Record* ends in August 1907 and he died in February 1908 and so he does not write his thoughts regarding the ceremony of the foundation stone or add any thoughts he had once the Cathedral ground had been broken. His written vision ends with the idea of a national cathedral being the center of Protestant unity as seen through the Episcopal Church. He wrote in *The Building of a Cathedral*, in 1901, what he meant when he said he saw Protestant unity within the Episcopal faith. He states that, “In the Anglican communion, as in the Primitive Church, all true Catholic and Protestant tendencies
find united and adequate expression” (Satterlee H. Y., 1901, p. 44). He declares that just as both the Bible and the Book of Common Prayer are greater than the denominational claims on them, so the “national Cathedral should stand in the capital of the whole country, not as a monument of the spirit of sectarianism, but as a witness for Christian unity” (p. 44). Calling the Cathedral of St. Peter and St. Paul by its formal name, as National Cathedral, as Cathedral of Washington, as a National Episcopal Cathedral, and as Washington Cathedral, all in the same book, speaks of the general aspiration Satterlee had for this cathedral idea. This Cathedral, to Satterlee, had the position of simply standing as witness for a Christian unity in a country that, at the time, desperately needed some kind of unity.
4.1 Washington Cathedral/National Cathedral/American Cathedral

“Your work is to be commended, because it represents the foundation of all progress, all government, and all civilization. That foundation is religion. Our country is not lacking in material resources, and though we need more education, it cannot be said to be lacking in intelligence.

But, certainly, it has need of a greater practical application of the truths of religion.”

~Calvin Coolidge

Once the Cathedral has officially been started, the stages of building did not go smoothly, for World War I, the Great Depression, and World War II interfered. The rhetoric surrounding the Cathedral changed to reflect a move from a rhetoric of “Protestantizing the nation” (For national cathedral, 1900) to a more continuous rhetoric of unity and a “participator in the sisterhood of nations” (Freeman J. E., 1923). The advent of The Cathedral Age in 1925, a quarterly magazine, helps create a sense of importance and urgency to building WNC. The magazine not only reflects how the Cathedral’s moniker changes to reflect the goals of each succeeding bishop and dean, it also allows other voices to speak for the idea of a national cathedral as well as giving a forum for a visual rhetoric by printing pictures of the Cathedral as it is being built.

The deaths of Bishop Satterlee, in 1908, and the first Cathedral architects, Bodley, in 1907, and Vaughan, in 1917, left a brief lull in placing the Cathedral at the forefront of the national conscience. That brief silence only lasted until the rise of the Rt. Rev. James E. Freeman, after the death of the Rt. Rev. Alfred Harding, second bishop of Washington and first (de facto)

54 Calvin Coolidge to Bishop Freeman, 17 September 1923. WNC, ChA: j. 102, b. 4, f. 5.
dean of the Cathedral in 1923. Not that Satterlee’s immediate successor was silent, but the discourse left behind is simply less voluminous. Bishop Harding’s 1917 continuance of Satterlee’s (1907) *The Working Out of an Ideal* extends the cathedral ideal that, as always, begins with L’Enfant’s plans. The cathedral idea as an ideal is firmly entrenched in the three-fold vision of the Cathedral: first, it is a house of prayer for all people; second, it is the bishop’s church; and third, it is the Mother Church of the Diocese of Washington. Beyond this, which is where Satterlee’s version of the treatise ends, Harding’s booklet extends the dialogue to explore the Cathedral as “An American Cathedral.”

The year of 1917 was volatile for the United States. Woodrow Wilson was only narrowly re-elected the previous November on a promise of non-intervention in the Great War taking place in Europe. Events quickly changed that philosophy and by April 1917, the United States declared war on Germany. By June, military conscription began to send millions of men into war. Unlike previous wars, all men were registered with the Selective Service, and all men, once called, absent certain restrictions and exemptions, had to serve. The wealthy could not hire someone to take his place (Chambers, 1987). In August, the Green Corn Rebellion took place in south central Oklahoma at the instigation of the Socialist Party and Working Class Union, marching against the recently completed first draft lottery. In a nation of poor immigrants and large itinerate farm worker populations, the events of war were not seen as economic equalizers. War, and labor, for the Socialist Party, then holding on to considerable political power, was the work of the “rich man.” Making ecclesiastic calls for donations to build a massive Episcopal Cathedral was, perhaps, not fiscally profitable. Yet, the call was still made.
Intended for a general audience, Harding’s 1917 treatise of the same name was meant to make the Cathedral truly speak to the Protestant American rather than more specifically to the Episcopalian. Choosing to ignore the specter of war and the growing socialist movement, Harding stays closely within the five parameters already laid out by Satterlee. This shows in his argument that begins with the claim that the nation’s founders, from its earliest colonists to the framers of the Declaration of Independence and Constitution, were a people of God. The repeated attempt to connect the Christian Bible to American ideals and law, and through Americanism to the Cathedral, is meant to make the Cathedral a natural assumption. More importantly, Washington Cathedral, as a free church residing in a free state, is able to fulfill its spiritual function in a way that no European cathedral has ever been able to do. The danger, of course, in a singularly secular state is that the moral code is decreased to its lowest acceptable level since it is a civil code rather than a salvatory code. Religion serves to restore a higher moral code; however, Harding’s argument is not one for religion, per se. His argument is for building a national cathedral that has the ability to speak for that higher moral code in the name of a moral people.

According to Harding, it is necessary, in the attempt to make the Cathedral both American and National, to combine the narratives of the nation as a divine gift with the narratives beginning to be formed about the Cathedral as a divinely righteous gift. American narratives such as George Washington praying on his knees at Valley Forge for divine help and that help given, George Washington finding a national temple for semi-religious ceremonies, and the divine inspiration of separating church and state, all relate directly to the building of Washington Cathedral.

---

Cathedral. Incorporating and assuming these narratives as divine and direct ancestors of the Cathedral are all necessary in making the slowly growing Cathedral a natural part of the American story. The intense work of Satterlee, right down to his last breath, along with the enthusiastic gifts toward the building of the Cathedral (not so much in money as in-kind gifts), and the resolute affirmation that the Cathedral as natural to the American story, yet not part of the government, all correspond to national narratives. As stressed by several colonial leaders, Harding underscores that, after all, no power is given to any entity, including the state, without the benevolence of the Almighty. As Harding puts it, the vision of the nation is one of “oneness,” and this vision is “of an increasing Christian unity among all those who profess and call themselves Christians” (p. 9). Of particular importance is the insistence that the mission of the Cathedral is religious, acting in counterpart to the State, filling the needs of the people that the State cannot fulfill. So even though the narratives correspond, the purposes of each, of church and state, are necessarily different. Just as our nation is considered to be governed by the people and for the people, the Cathedral is meant to be built by all people for all people to meet their spiritual needs. As a fundraising argument, Harding’s version of the Cathedral ideal was short-lived. Bishop Harding died in 1923, leaving the Cathedral built only as far as the completed apse.56

The Rt. Rev. James Freeman, as he came into office in 1923, began his mission by writing a booklet, The Capital of the Nation, wherein he begins to bring the Cathedral to the same table as Notre Dame in Paris, Westminster Abbey in London, and St. Paul’s in Rome. His concern is

---

56 The apse is a semicircular (or nearly semicircular) space terminating an axis and intended to house an altar. The East end of the Cathedral that holds the high altar is the apse. The WNC apse contains the Bethlehem Chapel that lies atop the foundation stone. Bishop Satterlee is buried in the Bethlehem Chapel.
that the nation, but especially the capital city, has given little attention to the representations of the nation’s character and great architectural aspirations. His concern is, perhaps, exaggerated; but his point, of course, is to bring attention to the building of the Cathedral. In 1923, the Bethlehem Chapel that holds the foundation stone has been built and the great Cathedral apse is completed. Freeman states that, in the Bethlehem Chapel, daily services are held and has been witness to a number of impressive gatherings compared to other churches in the city. More importantly, for Freeman, “it is being regarded as the logical place for those services that express in large terms our obligations and devotion as a great people.”

Hoping to complete the entire Cathedral within five years, he called for fundraising in the amount of ten million dollars. For the sum, Freeman further claims that the “great Protestant Cathedral in Washington” is integrally connected to the American people because the building of such an impressive structure inspires prayer and devotion (p. 12).

Freeman’s booklet is the first of a long series of articles written by the Cathedral bishops and deans meant to strengthen the “American” nature of the Cathedral. This booklet begins to outline the premises of all future arguments for the building of this national cathedral. First, he reinforces the legend of George Washington’s original intent to have a national temple as part of the Federal City. Second, the Cathedral represents American character based on Christian ideals. Third, the Cathedral is the point of moral discussion in concerns both national and international. Fourth, the Cathedral compares favorably with Westminster Abbey as the “place of sepulture” for the nation’s great and honored dead. Finally, as a house of prayer for all, the Cathedral acts as witness to “Americanism” because residing within the Cathedral is the nation-

---

al consciousness as a member of the world’s wealth and power and its residing moral responsibilities. Americanism, for Freeman, “connotes more than money power or man power. It interprets to our consciousness all that is implied in a living faith in a living God. Washington Cathedral is to be the greatest expression of this faith, the finest and truest interpreter of Americanism at its best” (p. 16). This five-fold mantra is repeated over and over in the ensuing years until its final stone is put in place. The need to repeat this refrain is clear in the monthly issues of the newly created Cathedral magazine, *The Cathedral Age*.

Publications supporting the fundraising to build the Cathedral also begin to use a more consistent form of the informal name for the Cathedral. Formally, the name is The Episcopal Cathedral of St. Peter and St. Paul. This clearly designates the Cathedral as Episcopalian in nature. By Freeman’s term as bishop in 1923, there is a consistent effort by Cathedral personnel to reduce the various terms used in the past to Washington Cathedral.58

By the time Freeman is installed as bishop of Washington, the Cathedral had need of a formal Cathedral dean as well. With the official breaking of ground and the beginning of construction, Bishop Harding became both the bishop and dean. However, it soon became obvious, especially after the death of architect Vaughan, that a named dean of the Cathedral needed to be appointed. The Very Rev. George Bratenahl59 was named dean in 1916, serving a full twenty years. Working with Carl W. Ackerman, Bratenahl oversaw the publication of *The Cathedral Age*, a quarterly established to “report cathedral news from all parts of the world. It will discuss and interpret the history, service, architecture and ideals of all cathedrals in the

---


59 The title, the Very Reverend, belongs to the dean, just as the Rt. Rev. belongs to the bishop.
hope that as this cathedral building age progresses these great temples may be built by worshipers and not ‘contributors.’”

Despite its grand announcement as an advocate for all cathedrals, its main focus, especially in the beginning, was geared toward WNC especially its advertising.

The first print of *The Cathedral Age* began auspiciously for Easter 1925. The claim, that the world is entering a new age of cathedral building, is reinforced by this first issue. More noticeable is the table of contents. First, one notices the dominance of the “America’s Westminster Abbey” claim. Second, is the re-published article written by the Honorable David J. Brewer, Associate Justice of the Supreme Court from 1889-1910, stating that we are a Christian nation. This is taken from a series of lectures he gave and published in 1905. Third, is the notice that the body of Admiral George Dewey, a strong supporter of WNC, and military hero, is to be interred in the Bethlehem Chapel of the Cathedral. The association between being an American Westminster Abbey and the burial of American hero, Dewey, cannot be denied. Brewer’s article corresponds with the bishop of Washington’s article on the nation’s faith. As of yet, only the association is made.

The second issue allowed for stronger statements about the state of the nation and its intendant needs. Dean Bratenahl declares in this issue that the nineteenth century is the age of individualism, and this age has produced the greedy world that entered the twentieth century. Individualizing the world means that each person builds his or her own little world, a world each person must furiously defend. The irony of the age of individualism is, for

---


Bratenahl, that these little prison walls of individual “rights” are called “freedom.” The walls of individualism deserve to be broken down, and Bratenahl spends his energy espousing the awakened sense of brotherhood that World War I begat. Washington Cathedral needs to be the place for all Americans to feel the religious impulse regardless of socio-economic status, regardless of race, and regardless of petty divisions between the faiths. In this sense, there has begun an enhancing of what a national religious home has to offer the American people, rather than simply the Episcopalian. This subtle move from the claim of the Episcopalian faith as the most amenable to what a truly national cathedral, outside of its Episcopalian nature, has to offer the American people is small in this one essay, but it is later picked up and made part of WNC’s “national” narrative. For now, always assumed and already established in the first issue is that America is a Christian nation.

Certainly Bratenahl believes the United States is a Christian country. There is this sense in the 1920s, especially by those steeped in the Christian faith, that the separation of church and state does not preclude a religious people, although at this time there is enough diversity of religion to understand that the best way to deal with that diversity is to ignore differences. The perception that early settlers were a people who worshipped God and that the founders of the nation were likewise is a part of American narrative. Bratenahl observed that even though older capital cities had great temples devoted to God for which the whole community of the nation could appeal and “offer its gratitude and petitions,” the United States had no such temple to offer its people. As is the case for Cathedral rhetorical practice now in place, Bratenahl focused on L’Enfant’s original plans for building a temple in the Federal City, although he

---

62 Bratenahl, G.C.F., “A Cathedral Building Age,” *The Cathedral Age*, I (2), p. 9; and WNC ChA: j. 102, b. 4, f. 5.
acknowledges that this long ago vision was based on a more homogeneous population. As the nation has grown more diverse, Bratenahl decries the loss of identity that must be recognized as inevitable unless there is a political unification that is buttressed by a spiritual unification. This requires some aspect of religion because, as has already been noted, this is a Christian nation ultimately built on Christian ideals. In fact, Bratenahl claims that the concept of unity is itself a Christian notion. At the very least, he claims that a society that embraces cathedral building is a society embracing a “spiritual regeneration.” This is reinforced by the very purpose of *The Cathedral Age* that is published to support the various beginnings across the U.S. and around the world to build cathedrals.

Balanced with the age of individualism, this concept of unity as a Christian ideal is interesting. The claim that Washington Cathedral is the glue that will hold the American people together, hanging on to American ideals, is bold. Bratenahl does not mention or argue that it is the Episcopal faith that serves as the best alternative to melding the people, as did Satterlee; instead, Bratenahl stays strictly in the language of “Christian ideals” and the “Christian religion.” He is concerned in the face of such cultural, national, and racial diversity, that the common denominator for new immigrants is what can be gained materially in the United States rather than what the country has to offer in the spiritual sense. It worried Bratenahl that a people formed based on a degree of financial reward instead of a spiritual reward was to deny the genius of the American ideal. Americanism is always in the argument for building the Cathedral. Further, Bratenahl deplores that those coming to America see evidence of economic prosperity in the skylines of cities while those buildings to secular wealth make obscure the spiritual wealth also available. What is peculiar is that only a few decades later, stained glass windows are dedicat-
ed to American industry and financial wealth because these are an aspect of Americanism that cannot be denied.

In the effort to gain donations from people across the nation, articles in *The Cathedral Age* come from a broader spectrum than simply the bishop and dean of the Cathedral. The cry for donations must appeal to those captains of industry and the poorer workers alike because it is only through the combination that the Cathedral becomes a home for all Americans. Each edition of the magazine contains a justification for building such a magnificent cathedral and an appeal for financial support. Articles from the Cathedral architect, Cathedral masons, Cathedral personnel along with articles from those with impressive credentials and pedigrees offer support that sounds urgent and a matter of moral duty in building Washington Cathedral, the term that rests most commonly on the place after publication of the first *Cathedral Age*. The practice of publishing, or rather re-publishing, articles, especially those of Satterlee and other important personages, such as Justice Brewer’s already noted allows for a constantly growing audience of contributors and subscribers to become familiar with the narrative strains of Cathedral discourse.

Above all, the fivefold refrain is given repeated attention with varying degrees of emphasis. In the 1920s, association with Americanism and American ideals as predominantly Christian is the mantra. As New York’s bishop, Henry Potter, wrote in 1902, and re-published in the Christmas issue of 1925,\(^\text{63}\) the American people may not have any keen personal sense of their own need of a religion; but they know that the religion which is inwrought with all the history of the American people stands

\(^{63}\) Even though the first issue of *The Cathedral Age* claimed to be a quarterly magazine, the first volume published eight issues covering two years instead of one. It has, ever after, been a quarterly.
for certain definite ideals of truth, and purity, and honesty, and loyalty, and self-sacrifice, which, from our first beginnings here, men have always held high aloft.\textsuperscript{64}

The strong connection between the purpose of the Cathedral and national narratives of Christian ideals and the God-ordained founding of the United States weaves its way through the various issues of \textit{The Cathedral Age}. Not to belabor the point, but remembering Satterlee’s pilgrimage to Jamestown just preceding the Peace Cross ceremony is brought forward almost twenty years when the Cathedral welcomed the Bishop of London to Washington. For this service, the Order of Jamestown\textsuperscript{65} joined the Bishop of London and Cathedral officiants in a service that ties the past with the present in a way to emphasize not the establishment of government in the New World, but establishment of God and faith as the founding ideals for the New World.

Building the Cathedral also required the support of current well-known and influential people. Speaking for the Cathedral in \textit{The Cathedral Age}, one can find local people such as doctors and lawyers, as well as national spokespersons. One of the most vocal is General John J. Pershing, hero of the Spanish-American War in the Philippines. Already familiar with the Cathedral when he attended the Peace Cross dedication, Pershing remained a fervent supporter and served as an honorary board member for many years. Additionally, Bishop Freeman’s attempt to use wealthy patrons to help bring the nation to the Cathedral shows in his placement

\textsuperscript{64}“The Uses of a Cathedral,” Henry C. Potter, \textit{The Cathedral Age}, Vol. 1, Number 4, p. 43.

\textsuperscript{65}The Order of Jamestown, 1607 refers to an organization formed and incorporated in 1901 with a three-fold purpose: (1) to awaken interest in the Episcopal Church, (2) to erect a suitable memorial to the memory of the Rev. Robert Hunt, who celebrated the first (Anglican) communion in the new colonies, and (3) to restore and improve the Bruton parish church at Williamsburg, Virginia, which is the successor of the Jamestown church originally established in 1607 (Chap. 254--An act to incorporate the order of Jamestown, 1607, 1901). The order was initially conceived of during a Pilgrimage in 1895 and a following Pilgrimage that included Satterlee for the occasion of the Peace Cross ceremony in 1898 (The order of Jamestown, 1607, 1904).
of the retired General and Treasury Secretary, Andrew Mellon, as chairman and member on the PECF Building Committee. Like Satterlee, Bishop Freeman, raised in New York, maintained close friend relationships with the movers and shakers of the time, including Pershing, Mellon, J.P. Morgan, and the Roosevelts. Always remembering that Washington Cathedral competed fiercely for donations and financing with St. John the Divine in NYC, Freeman and Pershing decided that use of the new form of mass media, the talking picture, was in order.

Bishop Freeman felt strongly that making the Cathedral national in the sense of the American people, as a whole, rather than national in the sense of the Episcopal Church, was fundamental to getting the Cathedral built and in building its future identity. As he emphasized in a Cathedral pamphlet, everyone who contributes to the Cathedral, also “contribute[s] to purifying and uplifting the life of the people of this country at the national capital, visited every year by tens of thousands of tourists...and so [are] the source of influences radiating forth and effective in every portion of the United States.” The means to disseminate the message requires a longer reach than any pamphlet has. Therefore, on February 22, 1930, George Washington’s 198th birthday, General Pershing released a video about the Cathedral.

Paramount Sound News invited General Pershing to speak in a talking news reel about WNC. Despite his previous rejections to appear in talkies, as chairman of the Cathedral’s National Committee, he finally consented. This meant that the Cathedral’s message was able to reach approximately forty million people, perhaps more. Naturally, he begins by claiming that the current conception of the Cathedral surely matched what George Washington had in mind.

---

66 “The National Cathedral at Washington: How every churchman can help to build it,” Attributed to Bishop Freeman, n.d. WNC ChA: j. 102, b. 5, f. 1.
67 “Announcing General Pershing’s Initial Talking Picture: Forty million people to hear about Washington Cathedral, 22 February 1930. WNC ChA: j. 102, b. 5, f. 1.
as “the symbol of our faith in the principles of religion.” Further, Pershing claims that every citizen must recognize that not only will the Cathedral represent the moral obligations of a moral people, but also that the Cathedral represents the ideals of democracy. This is because “people from every section of our country and from every walk of life will participate in its perfection.”

Again, the stress is made that the Cathedral stands for the American people, united in a Christian message, rather than as a means to unite the parochial Episcopal parishes across the nation. Pershing’s talkie, if seen by at least the estimated forty million, obviously did not fall on deaf ears, even though the message was heard during the darkest moments of the Great Depression. Donations came in; however, they were aided by three sizable gifts.

Between 1928 and 1932, the roof was completed over the Choir, the crypts beneath the nave were completed and opened to pilgrims, the first stone of the transepts was set with due ceremony, and the funds for structurally completing the north transept had been raised.

Speaking before the 1932 National Committee for Washington Cathedral meeting, General Pershing addressed such personages as Mrs. Herbert (Lou) Hoover, an honorary member, and Mrs. Woodrow (Edith) Wilson, honorary chairman of the National Women’s Committee for Washington Cathedral. George Washington’s Bicentennial birthday, celebrated throughout the city, was recognized in Pershing’s *George Washington Bicentennial Edition of the Washington Cathedral Guide Book*, which contains a wealth of information about the Cathedral and its expanding work.” As a final tribute of the occasion, Pershing offered a “Tribute to the Honorable Andrew W. Mellon” that thanks him for his “vision for a more beautiful National Capital [and a

---

man who] has comprehended the significance of Washington Cathedral as a symbol of the Nation’s faith.” The program reveals several important facts.

First, Bishop Freeman has freely utilized the voices of the wealthy and famous to speak for the Cathedral. These voices, represented here by General Pershing, stress the symbolism of the Cathedral as a “national” project representing a “national” ideal. The diverse religious affiliations of these wealthy voices prove the national appeal of WNC. The differing religious affiliations also proved the amiability that WNC tried to publically project. Still steeped in the Calvinist dogma that wealth represents God’s favor, as messengers for WNC, the famous and wealthy were powerful and persuasive voices. This insistence on using the voice of wealth to justify building this magnificently expansive and expensive cathedral hints at the still obvious hegemonic socio-economic strata the main characters of the Cathedral live and move. The number of anonymous donations and endowments given the Cathedral throughout its history, but especially during the Depression, indicates several possibilities such as the sense of nobles oblige, true humility and gratefulness, or the desire to remain unknown because of differing religious affiliations or a general mistrust of the displays of wealth during the Depression.

The millions of people suffering extreme economic hardship during the 1930s is well documented and the anger that the many starving and homeless felt toward members of the wealthy elite was quite forceful. The ideas of sharing the wealth, spreading the wealth, or re-distributing the wealth by taking from the rich and giving to the poor surfaced yet again during this time. Although Cathedral representatives seem oblivious to the gross disparities of the time, the discourse shows a strong reliance on the shared “ownership” of the Cathedral. The

desire to see the Cathedral as being “owned” by the many Americans who helped build it rather than being built due to the “contributors” who offered money for what might be a tax deduction, each small offering was made to matter. General Pershing, as an easily respected American hero, was not a member of the East Coast wealthy elite. He was born in Missouri, educated in Missouri, spent time as a traveling salesman, and taught at the Negro school in his hometown of Laclede, Missouri. His attendance at West Point was for the superior education he felt he would receive over Missouri schools (Duffy, 2009). Coming from a more humble background, there seems to be no public record of his religious background and affiliation. He was a Freemason member of the Lincoln Lodge Number 19 in Lincoln, Nebraska (Hamill & Gilbert, 1999), which may be the impetus of his connection with WNC (other than his initial participation at the Peace Cross ceremony in 1898). General Pershing’s voice in promoting the Cathedral as a desirable national church was forged more by its message of serving as a moral indicator and compass of the American people rather than as a denominational church home.

Second, what is clear is that emphasis on being national and American in essence. This rhetorical move might be pragmatic on Freeman’s part in order to garner the necessary donations to get the Cathedral built or it could be a sincere desire to expand Satterlee’s limited focus. The sustained focus on the role of George Washington’s vision and L’Enfant’s original plan for the Federal City that continues as refrain for WNC’s justification reveals an intent to reinforce that claim that what is wanted is not an American Christian Church, but a Christian America with a church that brings the diversity of religions together for those national purposes that occur. The variations for naming the Cathedral, from Washington Cathedral to American Cathedral to National Cathedral, appear in the various reports, news stories, and pamphlets pub-
lished during this time. What seems to be on hold is the term “America’s Westminster Abbey.” Although occasionally used, at this time, it is not in the general rhetoric stemming from the Cathedral.

Finally, women have been given a stronger regard and a more powerful voice speaking and working for WNC. After gaining suffrage in 1921, women enter the public sphere as never before. Bringing powerful women into the Cathedral infrastructure serves the Cathedral in a powerful way. Building a cathedral requires more than cutting stone and raising money. There is that difference between a house and a home that requires the woman’s touch. Even though WNC is built to be a house of prayer for all people, women serve to make that house a desirous place to pray. Not in the public eye in the same way as men, General Pershing for example, Mrs. Hoover, Mrs. Wilson, and many of their wealthy feminine friends begin the work of beautifying the grounds, beginning with the Cathedral gardens. As America’s Cathedral, the need to create the proper frame for the Cathedral is no less important than structurally designing and building the place. What ought to be acknowledged in this is the Women’s Committee plans for raising funds through not only their beautification work, but also through the philanthropy and financial strength of women members. The objective of the National Women’s Committee was to increase “annual” members, thereby dedicating perpetual funds through a dues structure. This beginning of an on-going mission by women proves auspicious for the Cathedral, and supports Satterlee’s belief in the need to include women in the Cathedral’s power structure and life.

Yet, it is important to note that other than General Pershing’s public film address and the public religious services that occasionally were on public radio, the prime audience for
fundraising is still those wealthy and elites that Satterlee relied on. The settling on the term “Washington Cathedral” was a way to confirm its connection with things that belong in the nation’s capital. The term also is devoid of denominationalism, leaving a certain amount of ambiguity associated with the name. The focus of Cathedral discourse is still on fundraising and national military associations of hero recognition and prayers.

4.2 Gesamthunstwerk—The Washington and Lincoln Bays

The deaths of WNC’s first set of architects, Bodley and Vaughan, led to the Cathedral’s last architect, Philip Frohman, who immediately set about making certain changes that created the final architectural wonder the Cathedral now is. Christopher Rowe has already laid out Frohman’s architectural philosophy, including a philosophy of Gesamtkunstwerk, or “complete work of art.” The focus of my project is not on the specific works of art; rather it focuses on the national narrative the art of the Cathedral speaks as natural and necessary and as part of the Cathedral’s theology as a national cathedral, specifically the Washington and Lincoln Bays.

Frohman’s dedication to the Americanizing of the Cathedral is attested in his belief that the idea of a “national church” is best communicated through the use of physical space: “place [sh]ould be made for statues, bas-reliefs, and other works commemorating great American heroes and statesmen of the United States, and historical incidents of Colonial times and after the Revolution, which are dear to the hearts of the American people” (Harrington, 1979, p. 15). Because of this, WNC is home to statues, stained-glass windows, carvings, and kneeling cushions devoted to American life. The Presidential bays created for the statues of Washington and Lincoln on either side of the nave near the Western entrance represent national upheaval and optimism (Kendig & Llewellyn, 1995). This dedication to the two most famous Presidents plain-
ly illustrates the incorporation of Americana, metaphorically, as anchoring the front of the Cathedral facing the Capital City.

The Cathedral is built in the traditional cruciform manner (Appendix F). WNC is built east to west in the form of a cross. The arms of the cross are referred to as transepts running north to south; the top of the cross is the apse at the eastern end of the Cathedral, while the long bottom of the cross is the nave ending at the Western entrance. The apse holds the sanctuary and altar. The nave holds the congregation. The glory of a Gothic cathedral is its use of pointed arches and flying buttresses since this allows for soaring heights. This Gothic structure allows for large window spaces and the use of natural light. Natural light streaming through large stained-glass windows creates an embellishment that cannot be imitated using artificial light. The high-ceilinged vaulting and the supporting buttresses, then, serve as the bone structure that supports the total experience of a Gothic cathedral. The eyes are forced upward as if to underscore man’s insignificance and God’s glory. At the same time, there is much to behold at eye level in the many bays along the nave.

Cathedral architect Frohman kept a philosophy in his personal style of design that a building could only achieve its greatest potential if all the elements, both structural and decorative, worked together the way the architect envisions the entire project (Rowe, 1999, p. 227). For an office building or a home, this is highly likely to occur. For a cathedral, with layers of bureaucratic control with various committees and ecclesiastic levels of power, achieving Gesamtkunstwerk is far more difficult and unlikely. No doubt, while the building was on-going, the arguments over arches, towers, windows, carvings, statuary, and ironwork were tense and

---

70 A bay is a division or compartment in the arrangement of the building by space between piers. In WNC, bays usually have a theme, which is told in the carvings, statues, and windows, related to a person, place, event or idea.
terse; but the end product is beautifully blended, even with the many differences that time inevitably demanded. The Cathedral now stands as a monument to the many changes of style, philosophy, and values that the nation withstood over the course of the last century, and national narratives are an essential part of the Cathedral.

That there should be statues of and dedications to Presidents Washington and Lincoln should come as no surprise as they are the giants of our heritage. George Washington, as Father of Our Country, and as the initiator of the need for a representative religious aspect of society and government, is given prominent display in the south side of the West Entrance of the Cathedral. There is another statue of George Washington, an equestrian themed statue, dedicated in 1957, outside in the Cathedral close; however, that statue will not be covered in this project because it is not residing as a part of WNC proper.

Representing upheaval and redemption, President Lincoln’s statue is located on the north side of the West Entrance. Lincoln’s statue is accompanied by the Civil War stained-glass window. A second Lincoln statue resides in the Parclose staircase located just south of the north transept. This smaller statue is Lincoln kneeling in prayer. Both Lincoln statues will be discussed here because they are a permanent part of WNC.

Planned space in Frohman’s blueprints, and modified from Bodley and Vaughan’s plans, the two presidential bays were not finished until the late 1970s when the nave was finally completed. The statues, however, were dedicated and temporarily placed until their respective bays were complete, and their conception long pre-dates their placement.

The statue of George Washington (Appendix G) was given to WNC by the Supreme Council 33° Freemasons of the Southern Jurisdiction of the U.S.A. in 1947. Created by sculptor
Lee O. Lawrie, Washington stands atop an octagonal pedestal, each side engraved with a titular heading: First Citizen, President, Churchman, Patriot, Free Mason, Farmer, Statesman, and Soldier. Tricorn hat in his right hand laying across his belly toward his left hand, Washington looks up, his face determined, his eyes look gravely forward as if resigned and humble. Lawrie dressed Washington in his Sunday clothes in order to show “not the soldier, not the president, but the man Washington, coming into Christ Church, Alexandria, pausing a moment before going down the aisle to his pew” (Hodapp, 2007, p. 250). Of the eight titles carved into the pedestal, only one has additional writing carved with the title. Lined with Washington’s front is the title of “First Citizen.” Carved below is the inscription stating the statue was donated by the Masons. The inscription reads: First Citizen, Given by the Supreme Council 33° Mother Council of the World, A.:A.:S.:R.: of the Free Masonry of the Southern Jurisdiction of the United States of America, 1947. On the wall behind Washington are three Masonic symbols: the Masonic square, compass, and gavel.

The Cathedral owes much to President Washington and this is clear in all rhetoric coming from the Cathedral. On the event of Washington’s bicentennial in 1932, WNC’s National Women’s Committee published a booklet entitled “For Church and Country” that began with the statement, “George Washington was a spiritually-minded man, and a loyal churchman, as well as a soldier, patriot, and statesman, and it is highly appropriate that a national commemoration of his birth should include a great religious service in the Cathedral at the Nation’s Capi-

---

71 A.:A.:S.:R.: is the code for Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite. Per David Bindel, Free Mason in personal correspondence.
72 I leave the idea of masonic influence alone as it is not an essential aspect of the narrative this dissertation covers. Yet, I acknowledge that it is intriguing.
A service was not held since the essential portions of the North and South transepts could not be finished in time; however, this evidence of the long-term planning of the proper place for Washington’s commemoration shows his importance to the Cathedral. Often quoted, Washington, by the 1930s, is now a permanent part of WNC’s narrative, just as much as he is in the national narrative. Intertwining the narratives is in near constant refrain. Not only is George Washington our nation’s “first citizen” and national father, he is at the same time seen as a spiritual man, and for the Cathedral, the man representing a spiritual heritage. In today’s terms, we could say he was spiritual, not religious, and this spirituality is firmly embraced by Washington Cathedral. Dreading the vices of capitalism and materialism, Cathedral spokespersons keep Washington and his views for a moral society, guided by the hand of religion, ever in the dialogue. The presence of Washington in his bay serves as an obvious reminder that WNC is an American cathedral and holder of American ideals. More subtlety, however, Washington’s statue, with his octagonal titular pedestal, located on the south side, or the side closest to the seat of government, the White House and Congress. His positioning there represents not only leadership, but importantly, moral direction. In his place in the Cathedral, Washington leads his fellow Americans into the nave. Facing the Cathedral altar, Washington symbolizes not only a

---

73 For Church and Country: A suggestion of the opportunities for religious and patriotic service offered by the National Women’s Committee for Washington Cathedral. WNC ChA: j. 102, b. 5, f. 1.

74 An excellent explanation of the George Washington persona, built almost to cult level, can be found in an article by Adam Greenhalgh’s “Not a man but a god,” Winterthur Portfolio, 41 (4), pp. 269-303. This article centers on Gilbert Stuart’s Athenaeum portrait of George Washington. Following David Morgan’s thesis that Washington represents America’s original father of civil religion as a way to find American commonality among the nation’s diverse population and religious affiliations around the time of Washington’s bicentennial birthday in 1932, Greenhalph offers that this portrait served as opportunity for Protestants and Catholics to form a sort of integration. Catholics found integrating the image of Washington in Catholic symbolism helped form an imagined community wherein Catholics could also claim an American heritage. This Catholic packaging and dissemination of Washington as a cult figure bridged the gap between Catholic and American cultural spheres in the mid-1930s.
place, but a seeing of direction. That direction is toward a higher authority than the seat of
government, which is located behind Washington.

Keeping President Washington company in the bay is a small window honoring his wife,
Martha, and a large window featuring “The Founding of a New Nation” in abstract form. That
Martha Washington is honored, small as the token is, is remarkable and there are no extant
public references to her window. No other patriot honored in the Cathedral is accompanied by
his wife, except of course in the case of crypts. Lincoln stands alone in both his statues; Mary
Todd does not reside at WNC.

The Lincoln bay, located on the opposite side of the Cathedral from Washington, holds a
statue of Lincoln carved by Walker Hancock, and the text of his Farewell Address to the people
of Springfield, Illinois on February 11, 1861 (Appendix H). The speech represents that moment
when he left behind all that was familiar and supportive and moved into the treacherous arms
of the political world found in Washington, D.C. at the cusp of the Civil War. The text reads,

My friends, no one, not in my situation, can appreciate my feeling of sadness at this
parting. To this place, and the kindness of these people, I owe everything. Here I have
lived a quarter of a century, and have passed from a young to an old man. Here my
children have been born, and one is buried. I now leave, not knowing when, or whether
ever, I may return, with a task before me greater than that which rested upon Washin-
gton. Without the assistance of the Divine Being who ever attended him, I cannot suc-
ceed. With that assistance I cannot fail. Trusting in Him who can go with me, and re-
main with you, and be everywhere for good, let us confidently hope that all will yet be
well. To His care commending you, as I hope in your prayers you will commend me, I bid you an affectionate farewell.

That this speech accompanies the Lincoln statue, as opposed to others wherein he calls upon the power of the Almighty, is curious. He states here that his job ahead carries a greater burden on his soul than even George Washington carried in getting the nation started. Washington began a country from scratch, so to speak, while Lincoln must keep the country Washington started from splitting in half amid a combination of moral and economic problems.

The Cathedral, in giving the Lincoln bay this tone of the dire need of reconciliation toward a more moral society, clearly states the case of the religious purpose of WNC. The government, without the aid of the Almighty, is doomed. It should be noted that President Lincoln was ambivalent, or at least reticent, about religion. He is quoted as saying, upon the question of his religious views and faith, that “I am not a member of any Christian Church, is true; but I have never denied the truth of the Scriptures; and I have never spoken with intentional disrespect of religion in general.” It seems fitting that Lincoln and his obtuse reference to the Almighty resides in the anchoring place opposite Washington. Lincoln, however, is presented with his eyes lowered and with solemn expression as if the weight of his presidency defined his total person, even though the statue is of him as he leaves for the presidency rather than years into the presidency. Unlike George Washington, Abraham Lincoln expresses the modern man and his hesitancy to claim a higher power, especially in the face of such a looming civil war over the issue of slavery. The Cathedral’s decision to place Lincoln so near the front lays witness to the willingness of the Cathedral to see the problems facing modern man, his fallen nature, and

---

the strength required for endurance. The story of Lincoln’s assassination, the ultimate sacrifice for any patriot, of course outlives his religious beliefs, but that sacrifice also speaks to martyrdom, the kind that all presidents must face.

Like his fellow president on the other side of the Cathedral. Lincoln’s back is to the seat of government and facing the altar. In front of Lincoln, embedded in the floor, is a star; inside the star, at each point and in the center, are Lincoln pennies. At the base of Lincoln’s speech are basket offerings of food (although the offerings periodically change). Located on the north side of the Cathedral, Lincoln is forever connected with the War Between the States. If analogous to the North Star, or lodestar, Lincoln’s statue on the north side acts as a form of navigation. The North Star, or Polaris, has since the beginning of time served as a beacon and tool of navigation. Known not for its brightness but for its static location, the North Star is steady and reliable. Wisconsin politician, Carl Schurz, known for his integrity, siding with Lincoln during the Lincoln-Douglas debates stated that “Ideals are like the stars. We will never reach them, but like mariners on the sea, we chart our course by them” (Chamberlain, 2002). Lincoln came from a humbler background than Washington, he lived a more difficult life, and he was the necessary man the nation needed at this time to navigate the nation through one of its darkest hours. Lincoln represents what is constant, sturdy, and reliable—a mirror to that which is so reasonable and natural about the Cathedral’s existence.

Lincoln’s second statue of him kneeling is located in a small stairwell, called the Parclose Stairs, close to the high altar in the southern part of the eastern transept. The sculpture is by Herbert Houck and was rejected for the Lincoln Memorial located on Washington Mall. The Rt. Rev. Nathan Baxter, in a sermon, noted that the statue’s inspiration came from Houck’s grand-
father, who (allegedly) saw Abraham Lincoln kneeling in the woods just before delivering the 
Gettysburg Address (Baxter N. D., 2002). At a lonely moment, Lincoln, feeling small and un-
loved, went to the only place he had to find strength and solace—his knees.

These two statues, one tall and confident showing one hand ready to receive the world, 
the other small and unsure, hands closed together, act as witnesses to the need for a national 
spiritual home born of hope and prayer. His wife, Mary Todd Lincoln, is noted as saying that 
while it was true that Lincoln thought about religion more often after their son Willie died and 
at the time he went to Gettysburg, but that his spirituality was “a kind of poetry in his nature, 
and he was never a technical Christian.” 76 Poetry seeming fitting, there is also another inscrip-
tion in the Lincoln Bay of a poem that simply confirms what the two statues convey:

Abraham Lincoln

Whose lonely soul

God kindled

Is here remembered

By a people

Their conflict healed

By the truth

That marches on

The poem sums the totality of the Lincoln statues reinforcing the need for more spiritual and 
moral guidance in those dark moments. The Civil War uncovered so much national confusion 
and moral decay regarding slavery. That the war led to the religious philosophy of Social Gospel

ought not be a matter of great enlightenment. The evangelical impulse that soon followed led to the understanding that rugged individualism and the Calvinist-Protestant work ethic were accompanied by the “view of society as being unified under God’s moral government” (Marsden, 1973, p. 14). Men were individuals and members of nations making national judgment hinge on how well each man, individually and collectively, lived God’s law. This is that truth in the American and Cathedral narratives that marches on. Reminiscent of the “Battle Hymn of the Republic,” the Lincoln poem epitomizes those lonely, wretched and dark years of the Civil War and the need to reconcile the blood that was shed in the battle of brother against brother, son against father, and state against state. An important part of the essence of Gesamthunstwerk that resides within the Cathedral’s character is the nation’s history recorded in such a way as to remember the wicked bloodshed of the Civil War, and the Cathedral has given prominence to this reminder of the loneliness of self-righteousness.

Sculptor Hancock created the standing Lincoln statue, with one hand projecting outward and one hand held close to his heart, to show the two sides of the man—the public and the private (Kendig & Llewellyn, 1995, p. 142). Yet, one can also imagine that those hands represent a reaching out for spiritual guidance for a broken heart, especially in light of the two inscriptions accompanying the statue. Both the Lincoln bay display and the kneeling Lincoln show a man that understands there are times when the secular world simply does not offer enough and a higher and calmer source of strength is necessary. When the Bishop Baxter gave his 2002 sermon using the story of Jonah to speak of the impending war the United States was about to

77 Written by Julia Ward Howe in 1862, “The Battle Hymn of the Republic” was written in Washington, D.C. at the beginning of the Civil War. The lyrics are: “Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord; He has trampled out the vintage where the grapes of wrath are stored; He hath loosed the fateful lightening of his terrible swift sword; His truth is marching on.”
embark, he refers to that moment when Lincoln felt the need to find strength on bended knee. Baxter’s sermon was about the Christian response to war, and because WNC speaks independently of the state, Baxter was able to use the frustrated kneeling Lincoln as the icon of Christian response. Transcending the Civil War, the statue of the kneeling Lincoln has grown to represent the tyranny of all war, strife, and disaster. Placed in its cubby in 1938, the statue has spoken to bishops, deans, priests, and visitors for almost seventy-five years. Indeed, all three statues have represented how all the artwork within the Cathedral speaks of the intimate connection of national and religious ideals.

The two presidential bays at the front of the Western Entrance are accompanied by state seals embedded into the vestibule floor, while the nave is lined with state flags. The state flags are covered in Chapter 5, but I want to point out that all secular symbols residing within the Cathedral are not simply accompanied by religious symbols; they are dominated by the religious. Presidents Washington and Lincoln are standing, humbly and reverently, inside. They are at the front as if to say they honor their place and understand their place within. Washington was always friendly to the Anglican cause and Lincoln may never have graced an Episcopal Church, but it is Lincoln who is shown on his knees in the intimate stairwell connecting the Bethlehem Chapel, where the foundation stone rests, with the high altar just above. His presence there expresses Satterlee’s thought in his 1901 book, *The Building of a Cathedral*: “For a house of prayer for all people means a spiritual home to which men of every class, rich and poor, statesman, tradesman and labourer (sic), may come without money and without price, with the consciousness that it is their common Father’s house” (p. 48). The focus in the Cathedral is always on the religious and spiritual, making sure that the secular is subordinate to, as
well as intimately tied with, the religious cause of the Cathedral. The sheer immense proportions of the cavernous interior of the Cathedral ensures that no matter how many secular symbols reside within, they submit their earthly power and purpose to what is obviously greater.

At the end of this short era, depicted in Chapter 4, of the Cathedral’s life, the Great War (WWI) had lasted 1,563 days, claimed more than ten million soldiers, wounded more than twenty million people, and destroyed more than $300 billion in property and treasure (Kennedy, 1999). The Great Depression keenly affected the most vulnerable of the nation—the very young, the elderly, the least dedicated, the unskilled, and rural farm workers. This was multiplied greatly for blacks, immigrants, and Mexican-Americans. At the height of the Depression, close to one-fifth of all people on federal relief roles were black (Kennedy, 1999, p. 164). Lost in her own misery, the temptation for Americans at the cusp of World War II, was to remain isolated and inwardly focused while at the same time feeling sure that world peace was possible through diplomacy and neutrality. The Cathedral echoed this rhetoric, but added caution to the idea of isolation.

Focused on being kind and sisterly to other nations, knowing that we are connected but relying on the vast ocean between us and “them,” Cathedral building continued. Justification for building continued, as did fundraising. In a radio broadcast of the Armistice Day address delivered at the annual commemoration of President Woodrow Wilson on November 11, 1930, Bishop Freeman concluded, “Let us not grow so callous or forgetful as to be unmindful of what it cost to restore a world’s tranquility. Let us not be so immersed in our own concerns as to be-
lieve ourselves immune to the ills of other peoples.” Bishop Freeman illustrates how religion tinged with secular overtones residing within the Cathedral works together to define a national-religious ideal. Americanism, as being what separates us from the rest of the world, is the focus, but less myopically than in the past. By the mid-1930s, the winds of another war were felt, if not openly acknowledged. Of course, Satterlee’s Peace Cross still represents the ideals of the Cathedral. Democracy, freedom and peace, as well as turmoil and strife, are clearly represented in the visual and written rhetoric of Washington and Lincoln. Turmoil and strife are seen as evils to be avoided if possible, but not as an excuse for moral blindness to our neighbor. Between the years of 1908 and 1938, although the building of the Cathedral was slow, and certainly not in accordance to Freeman’s plan of five years, there was much going on internally to create a modern national vision for the Cathedral. The national identity at this time has now surpassed Satterlee’s and Harding’s. Freeman and the Cathedral’s architect, Frohman, have expanded the meaning of what makes Washington Cathedral national in essence to include the narratives of not only George Washington, but also the intertwining of other national narratives into the fabric of the Cathedral, not just the written and oral discourse.

---

CHAPTER 5: THE CATHEDRAL DURING WWII—LAND OF THE FREE AND HOME OF THE BRAVE

5.1 Land of the Free: Tourism at the New Jerusalem Cathedral

“Men and women of all faiths, yes, men and women of little faith, must cry out today to the God they have known or to the God they long to believe in at such a time. We ask for victory, the triumph of good over evil, of freedom over slavery, of decency over brutality, and of order over chaos.”

~Rt. Rev. Angus Dun, Bishop of Washington

During WWII, WNC served wartime duty by opening its doors to a variety of ecumenical speakers who discussed “the broader usefulness and functions of the Church in time of national crisis” (United services at Washington Cathedral, 1942), by serving as an air raid post, by sponsoring evening tours, and by sponsoring additional Saturday tours specifically for servicemen staying in Washington, D.C. During this time, Cathedral rhetoric changed focus from the previous outward “sisterhood of nations” with an American appeal rhetoric to an inward-focused rhetoric based on WNC’s national nature and on its role as the home of peace and reconciliation, of “comradeship and cooperation” (United services at Washington Cathedral, 1942). Tourism, especially, during and immediately after WWII helps show off the continued building of the Cathedral, now close to half completed, by bringing in not only awareness of its existence, but its ecumenically spiritual and national character.

The devastation of the Great Depression left many in the nation wondering if the United States could possibly survive. For the moment, the idea of material goods mattered in a different way from the post-WWI/Roaring 20s era and into the great devastation of the Depression. Between 1930 and 1933, the number of unemployed persons rose from five million to thirteen
million, representing almost one-fourth of the national workforce (Burg, 1996). Political changes also occurred throughout Europe, all triggered, domino-style, by the financial depression gripping the United States. The rise of fascism in Germany saw the coterminous rise of Adolph Hitler in Germany and Benito Mussolini in Italy. The nation, now facing a possible new war in the late 1930s, forced Americans to consider anew a sharper meaning of democracy and freedom, prosperity and materialism. As Bishop Freeman stated, “It is evident that our boasted industry, our excelling ingenuity have proved inadequate to meet the extraordinary conditions through which we are passing.” There was the idea that perhaps technology, by itself, was not the answer to progress, for progress’ value relies on people rather than objects. It is the “social people,” or people acting as a social unit, that determines social value, and as John Dewey clearly states, people act out moral judgment and moral responsibility through the social environment, making morality a social phenomenon (Dewey, 1973, p. 714). Since we value on a social, rather than truly individual, level, the Cathedral provides (at least according to Cathedral representatives) the necessary social moral backdrop for truth. Always referring back to George Washington, Freeman quotes from his Farewell Address: “Of all the dispositions and habits which lead to political prosperity, Religion and Morality are indispensable (sic) supports,” and with this sentiment, Freeman carries WNC into the delicate and turbulent years of World War II. With the world in a seemingly continuous cycle of upheaval, Freeman pushes the idea that man, especially Americans, ought to go back to the roots of the republic and heed the sage

---

79 For example, quoted from Burg’s *The Great Depression*, p. 94, an anonymous letter to President Hoover written in October 1930: “I am persuaded to write you, concerning aid to unemployment. I hope this movement will be speeded up so people in Pottstown will feel and know results before Cold weather comes upon us, the struggling starving working class under nourished Men. Women. And children. It really is alarming that this so called prosperous Nation that we must suffer on acct [account] of a few men seeking power and rule...I am one of the men out of work but the rich don’t care so long as they have full and plenty.”

advice of our Founding Fathers because, in the words of Bishop Freeman, “our strength does not reside in our man power, our inventive genius, our economic astuteness or our accumulated wealth; it resides in the moral and religious character of our people.”

The First World War taught Americans that they are not isolated from the world, but are an integral part of it. Relatives of and comrades-in-arms with certain European nations, as with any family, American learned that although it is good to let others fight their own battles, it is also good to help our brothers in need. It saves the family. This is a lesson the Cathedral takes to heart and continuously respects; but there are too many personal stories of Americans, especially of whole families rather than singular sons, during the Depression, replacing the stories of the Great War, to ignore that strong impulse toward an American society and Americanism.

The Cathedral, just prior to the advent of the Second World War, turns its rhetoric away from the attempt to be America’s Westminster Abbey (although this never entirely disappears and, as will be forwarded in section 5.4, reappears after the war), and towards a national cathedral focused on the spiritual needs of the nation. As Bishop Freeman lamented, “A sober reckoning with those values that we call “American ideals” must be had and the test of loyalty to them applied with increasing insistence.” This inward impulse led to an increased focus on making the Cathedral truly accessible for meeting the religious and moral needs of the people. Forcibly rejecting Marx’s dictum that religion is the opiate of the people, along with the notion that the

---

“materialism is the supreme desideratum,” the Bishop of Washington leads the Cathedral into its new era of traditional American ideals.

Knowing that the building of a Cathedral seems an awful expense in a time of such financial upheaval, the Cathedral dean and PECF understood the uphill battle for financing the building. In the 1930s, building hospitals and schools is difficult enough. The Cathedral, however, is not dependent on government funds. This means it has no ready source for income, and, as the Cathedral has no dedicated congregation of its own, is always relying on the generosity of the various donations of others who believe in the mission of WNC. Defending the meaning of the Cathedral’s very existence relies on people feeling the reality of majestic aura of the place as well as its spiritual necessity. The Cathedral decides to focus on Satterlee’s original vision of the Cathedral as “a house of prayer for all people” as well as Frohman’s idea of Gesamthunstwerk. The idea is to invite the public in, letting those who enter be enveloped by the national narratives of history and religion as one encompassing narrative.

Visitation, in the form of tourism, at the Cathedral begins in earnest with the outbreak of war in the late 1930s. Tours for schoolchildren are as much a focus for the Cathedral as general tourism in Washington, D.C. Pamphlets for tourism show an increasingly intensified sense of awareness that Public Relations are not exclusive for Cathedral members and donors. If the Cathedral is to be truly national, there must be a way to speak to those people of the nation; there is need to convince the public that Washington Cathedral is a cathedral for the people. No longer relying on the longer booklets and articles of the past to justify the Cathedral,

---

84 In a most frustrating manner, WNC’s tourism pamphlets are not dated. The cathedral archives do not have them separated or organized in a dated manner. It is near impossible for most of these pamphlets to be date determined. As a result, this section is devoted to tourism, in general, rather than specific to the WWII era. However, tourism pamphlets and tourism are not mentioned in any rhetoric prior to this era.
now almost half built, WNC reduces its print to pamphlets and increases its reach into the general public in a more personal way.

School children are particularly embraced because they are the future ambassadors for the Cathedral. School tours outside of parental jurisdiction allow children to explore more freely, and, being generally more open-minded, “children-as-the-future” represent a newly discovered *raison d'être* for the Cathedral’s existence. Tours for children bring not only the Cathedral idea to their awareness, tours also allow for religio-historical experience in a very real, hands-on manner. In one pamphlet titled, “Today Your Child Visited Washington National Cathedral,” parents are informed that their child participated in a free, no reservations required, hands-on experience at the Cathedral. The tour enables children the opportunity to engage in a bit of medieval cathedral building wherein they could piece together a stained glass window, use a chisel and mallet to carve stone, and make a gargoyle out of clay. The pamphlets offer a plethora of “fun facts” about the Cathedral:

Q: How large is the cathedral?

A: Washington National Cathedral is 83,012 square feet in area, making it the sixth largest cathedral in the world and the second largest cathedral in the United States.

Q: How much do the stones weigh?

A: The average piece of stone weighs 300 pounds. The heaviest stone in the cathedral is the 5.5 ton center boss over the west balcony. A boss is the carved stone placed where the ribs in the vaulting meet.

Q: How many gargoyles are there on the cathedral?
A: More than 100 gargoyles, including a monkey, an owl, and many fantastic creatures, have been set on the cathedral.

And so on. The history lesson naturally begins with the George Washington/Pierre L’Enfant equation. Associating the founding of the nation with the founding of the cathedral is thoroughly embedded in Cathedral rhetoric.

Walking children through the Cathedral while it is being built, seeing the stone masons at work, seeing the additions of stained-glass windows, and finding all the small American novelties in the Cathedral can only be fun for children. No less important is the children’s chapel, built small scale for smaller children (Appendix J). The chapel includes a small organ, a statue of a child Christ with his arms wide open inviting children to come forth, a stained glass window telling the story of Samuel and David, a statue of St. Michael slaying a dragon, and needlepoint kneelers of Noah’s Ark and various animals. Not ending in the physical aspects of the Cathedral, children are given the stories of children involved in the building of the Cathedral. In a Reader’s Digest article (Bryant, 1966) reprinted by the Cathedral, we learn two stories: (1) The teacher of a high-school Latin class in Pontiac, MI, took her pupils to Washington every year for fifteen years, and their aggregate gifts of $900 are designated to carve a corbel (projecting wall support) depicting an open book and sword with the Latin inscription *Spiritus Gladius*—the Sword of the Spirit. (2) Two children gave $10 as a memorial to their mother after their aunt brought the two orphans to the Cathedral business office to inquire about the price of a stone. They returned three months later with a box filled with nickels and dimes amounting to the $10.
The powerful stories of the contributions by and to children in the name of the cathedral are not simply cute and heartwarming. They illustrate the narrative nature of the Cathedral as a cathedral for all people, including children. Blending the Christian story of Jesus welcoming the children into the national nature of the Cathedral is a major trope not to be belittled. In the still segregated world of the United States, bringing children into the Cathedral together and seeing how the Cathedral welcomes all and blends all is a major effort with long-term non-guaranteed possibilities. [During the war, there is little rhetoric that speaks directly of the race factor, but the Cathedral has always been friendly to the African-American population, in general, from the beginning as shown in Satterlee’s Private Record in his resolve to proselytize the Negro population. There is no argument, however, that although there is a general acceptance, there is also no direct effort to make either the Episcopal Church or the Cathedral inviting to the Negro race.]

The pamphlet for children’s visits is directed toward the parents, but the tour is decidedly directed to impress children and works hard to achieve what Walter Fisher calls narrative fidelity, or verisimilitude (Fisher W. R., 1984). Children must buy into the stories and those stories must be memorable, personalized, and real. Not that the Cathedral is working toward some practical, pragmatic, or rational argument for the moral purposes of building a Cathedral geared toward children; rather, the Cathedral is working to establish a theological narrative that corresponds with the national narrative, one that even children understand and will remember long afterward. If children are our future, and Jesus Christ welcomes and embraces the value of children, then the Cathedral must show that the nation also values children because they are the future leaders of a powerful—and ideologically Christian—nation. That they
participated in the building, through exposure to Gothic stone masonry, stained-glass making, and gargoyle carving, is enough to administer narrative fidelity between George Washington’s desire to build a national temple and the cathedral now being built.

5.2 Home of the Brave: Tours for the American Soldier

Not that children are the only tourists WNC sought and for whom they created a room, but they are an important force. Just as important, certainly by the numbers, are tourists, workers, and soldiers who flooded the nation’s capital during the beginning years of WWII. Thousands of tourists came to the capital city, if only to visit their family and friends in the military stationed at the various forts located around the D.C. area. At the outset of WWII there were five military bases located around the D.C. area: Ft. Lee in Prince George; Ft. Eustis and Langley AFB in Hampton; Ft. Belvoir in Fairfax; and Ft. Myer in Arlington next to Arlington Cemetery. By 1941, the War Department employed over 24,000 civilian and military personnel, and was expecting that number to grow to over 30,000 in the next year (Pentagon History, 2012). Given four days beginning Thursday, July 17, 1941 to draw plans to house 40,000 military personnel in a building that was no larger than four million square feet contained within four stories and holding no elevators, architect/engineers Lt. Col. Hugh Casey and George Bergstrom designed a five-story pentagon-shaped building over the weekend. The War Department approved of the plans on Monday, and sent the plans to the White House. Congress approved the plans on Tuesday. Construction began in September was complete sixteen months later in January 1943. Meanwhile, massive housing in the area began to appear, quickly and cheaply built, for military families. Washington, D.C. was growing at a tremendous pace during this time. From 1930 to 1950, Washington, D.C. almost doubled its population from just over
486,000 to just over 802,000 (D.C. in wartime, 2001). This massive growth created headaches for the government, but surely must have seemed a god-send to the Cathedral. Growing on the hill overlooking the capital city, WNC beacons to a people concerned about entering yet another massive and destructive war.

The Spring 1938 Cathedral Age introduced the kneeling Lincoln statue, WNC masses for the war dead, and “Cathedral Days” for each state. When visitors found their way up the hill to see the curious cathedral building they encountered the emblems of the nation being blended with the emblems of the Christian religion. In the Cathedral, docents offer tours explaining the painstaking details that go into the building of a Gothic cathedral. The North Transept and some of the South Transept are now complete. Regular daily services are held in the Bethlehem Chapel and have been since the Chapel was completed in 1912. Additionally, by 1942 outdoor hymns are sung during the month of July and August on the Women’s Porch attracting, not only the neighboring people, but also war workers. After President Roosevelt enacted Daylight Savings Time, or War Time, in February 1942, forty days after Pearl Harbor, \(^85\) WNC held evening tours during the summer, at first for the neighborhood, but quickly extending to the entire city. Not only did the Cathedral open its doors for small tours, the Cathedral also served its patriotic duty by offering office space for the neighborhood Air Raid Defense Post and by offering empty rooms during the summer months in the College of Preachers for billeting officers stationed in Washington.

\(^85\) Daylight Savings Time (DST), or war time, was enacted by President Roosevelt on February 9, 1942 and was continued until September 3, 1945. Each time zone was named by “War Time” so that Eastern Time became Eastern War Time, etc. After Japan surrendered in August 1945, the term “War Time” was changed to “Peace Time.” For further information on DST, see http://web.archive.org/web/20050214190234/http://exploredc.org/index.php?id=189.
Finally, the Cathedral held special tours on Saturday afternoons for uniformed military persons on leave in the D.C. area. Cathedral curator, John H. Bayless, led the tours in groups of thirty to fifty. Servicemen especially liked seeing the tombs of Admiral George Dewey and President Wilson\(^\text{86}\) and the Chapel of St. John, also known as the Army and Navy Chapel. St. John’s Chapel also contains a memorial to Lt. Norman Prince, founder of the LaFayette Escadrille, who was killed on the Western Front in the First World War. Likewise, uniformed visitors are impressed by the Chapel of St. Mary where a memorial to Larz Anderson\(^\text{87}\)—soldier, statesman and patriot—resides along with an American flag carved in stone. Soldiers longing for home were also greeted by their State Flag, hanging from the Triforium Gallery\(^\text{88}\) in the Great Choir and North Transept and hanging in the order in which each respective state entered the Union.\(^\text{89}\)

Interestingly, by the end of the war, state identification represented by a flag was stronger than ever; this may very well be because of this one action at Washington Cathedral. Allegiance to the U.S. flag became part of a youth promotion in schools in 1892 when Francis Bellamy wrote the original Pledge of Allegiance, thus bringing the American flag into the schools and as a normative part of a patriotic life (Swanson, 1990; Smith, 1975). Originally writ-

---

\(^{86}\) According the WNC website: On February 6, 1924, the funeral service for Woodrow Wilson was conducted at Wilson’s residence on S Street, N.W., by the Rt. Rev. James E. Freeman, third Episcopal Bishop of Washington. This was followed by a military funeral procession from the Wilson house up Massachusetts Avenue to the Way of Peace entrance to Bethlehem Chapel. Bishop Freeman conducted the formal burial rites in Bethlehem Chapel before immediate family members. In December 1961, the funeral for former First Lady Edith Bolling Galt Wilson was conducted by the Very Rev. Francis B. Sayre, Jr., dean of the Cathedral and grandson of Woodrow Wilson. This is the only funeral of a first lady to be held to date at the Cathedral. Mrs. Wilson is interred with her husband in Woodrow Wilson Bay in Washington National Cathedral.

\(^{87}\) Larz Anderson III (1866-1937) served in the diplomatic corps beginning with an appointment made at the request of fellow Harvard alum, Robert Todd Lincoln, President Lincoln’s son. He served in Rome, Belgium, and Japan. He also donated $500,000 for the construction of St. Mary’s Chapel.

\(^{88}\) A triforium gallery is the section separating the nave window level and the clerestory window level of a cathedral.

\(^{89}\) The flags are later moved to the nave aisles and are still placed in the order each state entered the union.
ten for school children, the Pledge was made part of the national flag code in 1942, just as the U.S. entered the war.\textsuperscript{90} The United States differs from other countries in that the individual states making up the nation have a large degree of autonomy in the making of laws, in education, in culture, and in constitutions. This allows for a strong allegiance to specific states. However, state flags are not automatically created with entry into the union. In fact, in 1876 only nine of the (then) thirty-eight Union states had official flags.\textsuperscript{91} By 1926, however, all the states had flags (Smith, 1975). Although each state had an official flag, few states prior to WWII had much allegiance toward those flags outside of the state capital and governor’s office (Smith, 1975). In this respect, the Cathedral began a tradition of state identity and pride within the national narrative.

Having joined in a united cause, both military service personnel and civilians were often forced to confront racial and socio-economic barriers during and after the war. Although black Americans have always fought for the United States, they have not always fought alongside their white counterparts. Even during the Second World War, military units were segregated. Despite segregation, there was the ultimate cause of the nation for which to fight. Not until 1944, did General Eisenhower finally allow a desegregated army, mainly due to shortages, when the President issued Order 9981 requiring military integration after World War II. Segregated or not, men and women from all (then) 48 states, its territories, and walks of life served the cause. War being the great assimilator, to a large degree, old ethnic, small-town identifications eroded, and foreign-language radio broadcasts and newspapers went bankrupt over the

\textsuperscript{90} Almost immediately, the obligatory swearing to the flag of the United States was challenged leading to the Supreme Court ruling in 1943 that the Pledge must be voluntary in West Virginia State Board of Education, 319 U.S. 624 (1943) overturning Minersville School District V. Gobitis, 310 U.S. 586 (1940).
\textsuperscript{91} Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, New York, South Carolina, Texas, Vermont, Virginia, and Wisconsin.
course of the war. Mobility increased with a new migration into urban areas during the war (Goodwin, 1994, p. 624). Always focusing on Christianity as the means of saving those American ideals of freedom and democracy, Washington Cathedral mostly disregarded matters of segregation during the war. Instead, the Cathedral chose honoring each state and its flag as another means of blending American and Cathedral narratives. Identity within the Cathedral then was composed of those symbols of Christianity, Americanism and State-ism, all intertwined, and yet consumed by the narratives of the Christian faith.

As noted in the Spring 1943 Cathedral Age, more than 80 percent of officers and enlisted personnel in the military regularly attend religious services at army camps, land bases, or aboard ship. The Cathedral used this in two ways: state flags and triptychs. Military personnel needing not only spiritual fulfillment but also a taste of home could find comfort at WNC. Beginning in 1942, the Cathedral began holding “State Sundays” at the eleven o’clock service.92 Until the flags for Alaska and Hawaii are added, forty eight states were recognized, one each week. On the fiftieth anniversary of Washington Cathedral, and the Sunday for presentation of the U.S. flag, President Eisenhower offered a message to the Cathedral saying, “For half a century, this splendid symbol of faith and service has been rising on Mt. St. Alban, overlooking the nation’s capital. Set up on a hill, this great cathedral proclaims for all to see that the highest loyalty of man is to God and neighbors.”93 Currently, out of the available fifty two weeks in a year, on Sunday, each state, the District of Columbia, and the U.S. flag is honored with the representative flag carried in the service procession and a prayer offered for the state. In 1972,

92 The 11:00 AM service in the Episcopal Church is traditionally the “high mass” service using Rite I in The Book of Common Prayer.
93 In a memo dtd 27 September 1957. WNC ChA: j. 132, b. 1, f. 11.
the Cathedral dean, the Very Rev. Francis Sayre, updated and rewrote the prayers for the states. All fifty prayers were contained in a tourist booklet so that tourists can take the booklets with them in order to offer personal prayers. Dean Sayre has considerately mentioned that although there is a Christian reference at the end of each prayer, those who are not Christian can still offer the prayer and simply omit the final ascription to Jesus Christ’s name, ending the prayer with “an honest Amen.” Tourists visiting the D.C. area could then feel a certain pride when they attended the Sunday service dedicated to their own state. Tours also offered the non-obligatory phrase that donations are always welcome.

Flags serve an important function in any collection of people. Besides providing an identity, flags serve to promote unity of spirit, or camaraderie. After serving together underneath the United States flag, military personnel especially might feel the pull of that intimate service and the duty patriotism inspires. State flags, however, serve a different function in the Cathedral. The emblems of Americana exist throughout the Cathedral, both at the national and state level. American national emblems, such as the Presidential Bays of Washington, Lincoln, and Wilson, serve to a connection to a national narrative of freedom and democracy. State flags, on the other hand, are not necessarily connected to American ideals. They are connected to smaller sets of communities, to more specific ideals. The feelings accorded to smaller communities, such as state, college, or even high school are mixtures of patriotism and duty, just as for the American flag, but at a more personal level. The history, culture and values of any individual state may include familial stories as well. As WNC honors each state, each state and its people and history is recognized for the unique contributions to the nation as a whole. No state is

94 Preface to tourist booklet title “For All the States,” dtd. 1972, signed by Dean Francis B. Sayre, Jr. WNC ChA: j. 102, b. 5, f. 3.
left unhonored, not even when a state is controversial in its laws and actions. All is forgiven at the Cathedral. Each state is equally important in the creation of the whole. Even though the American flag is carved in stone, as a permanent part of the Cathedral, unchanging and unswerving in its importance, state flags hang in all their colorful display, changing as the state changes. State flags sometimes change to reflect the values and personalities of the people living within. Tourists can see their state flags hanging proudly in the Cathedral and feel doubly included and accepted. International tourists can see that the United States of America is a nation made up of states and state ideals united with national and American ideals. In the most complete visual of what a nation composed of a united group of states looks like, the Cathedral brings the entire panorama into one complete whole residing within the covenant of a Christian God. In this way, each visitor easily recognizes the message that all of this—nation, states, and ideals—blend because they are ideologically connected to Christian ideals.

Not a part of the tours, but offered to military service personnel, were the memorial triptychs dedicated to military forces (Appendix K). Although not widely advertised, there are brief announcements in The Cathedral Age that let subscribers know how the Cathedral is functioning in its own war support effort—by doing its best to represent itself as a house of prayer for all people, an ecumenical home for the nation’s war-weary soldiers. This small rhetorical effort reveals how WNC chose to act as a “Patriot’s Shrine” and recognizes that freedom, especially for religion, does not come cheaply (Shrine to honor nation's patriots, 1945). A triptych is a work in three panels resembling folding doors closing inward but opened when in use. This means that it is not a permanent part of the Cathedral building (they were never meant to be a permanent part of the Cathedral), but is transportable for worship needs.
Finding religious solace in the Cathedral is naturally its purpose, but finding that same
solace in the field of war is not so easily done. Comments by officers of the Army and Navy of
the drabness and general lack of color during the military services held at bases and aboard
ships led to the suggestion of using triptychs.\textsuperscript{95} Led by the Citizen’s Committee of the Army and
Navy, a Cathedral Triptych Committee was formed, and the call for triptych designs went out
across the nation with many artists gladly answering the call. By 1945, more than three hun-
dred triptychs had been distributed to the Army and Navy for use wherever the need called.
Sent out into all theaters of war, these Cathedral-sent gifts added a religious and spiritual back-
ground to warships and other temporary military quarters. Measuring four by six feet, or slight-
ly smaller at four by four feet, the panels are colorful, religious and patriotic.

These triptychs, although not a part of the Cathedral, were instigated by the Cathedral
and tell of the efforts by the Cathedral to do its part in supporting the soldiers of the war, but
not war itself. The triptychs speak to service personnel of their role in defending their convic-
tion for the freedoms they enjoy in the United States. For example, in one (Appendix K), the
Guardian Angel Jophiel, Guardian of the Truth, holds a fiery sword in the center panel accom-
panied by a smaller image of the crucifixion on one of the two beams streaming from the wings
of an eagle in the background behind Jophiel. On the right panel, facing the Angel is an Ameri-
can soldier keeping eye contact with the Angel of Truth. In the lower left corner of the right
panel, next to the soldier’s leg is his family represented by his wife and two children, one in
arms. Between his legs is his home. On the left panel is a Templar knight, soldier before him,
sword behind. At the Templar knight’s feet are King Baldwin II of Jerusalem and his castle, the

\textsuperscript{95} Leila Mechlin, “Triptychs for the Army and Navy: A renaissance of religious art in America,” \textit{The Cathedral Age},
one the original knights defended from 1124-1131 A.D. The entire background is a burnt sienna in various shades that allow for shadows and light. A three-leveled wavy line across the top of all three panels separates the earthly from the heavenly, with those lines extending out in the center panel toward the crucifixion. The sacrificial Jesus then represents the foundation, the grounding, for the entire panel even though the image appears small and insignificant. All weapons are held in the right hand. Jophiel’s left hand points upward. The images, symbols, and colors all speak of fighting for righteous causes to the honor and glory and with the benediction of God. The main focus, however, is not the soldier, but the Angel of Truth pointing heavenward with one hand and holding the sword of fire with the other. The triptych thus reminds the soldier that the priority of God is not the fight, nor is it man himself. War itself is never glorified; rather, the fight for freedom, truth, and democracy is. Freely commissioned by the Cathedral, the triptych represents the artist’s view of war. Even though there was a traveling exhibition of some of the triptychs, many artists did not even sign their work because the triptychs were meant to be used for the spiritual benefit of military personnel, not as works of art.

Military personnel may or may not have known the origin of the triptychs and they may or may not have been connected specifically to Washington Cathedral or other area churches that might have also been involved in commissioning the triptychs. Cathedral participation for the triptychs was in the form of the missionary call. At this time, the Cathedral is tied to its physical space, but the outward movement of the triptychs acted as a forerunner to the idea

---

96 Created by Alfred James Tulk, this triptych was stationed at Camp Kilmer, New Jersey. Camp Kilmer was closed in 2009 as part of the Base Realignment and Closure Act of 2005. The whereabouts of this triptych is currently unknown.
that the Cathedral can leave its physical space. However, for the time, Washington Cathedral is very much still rooted on Mt. St. Alban’s hill.

Through the use of visualization, especially in tours and, to a degree, the triptychs, making the Cathedral a much needed spiritual refuge for tourists and military families, inevitably longing for home, WNC offers solace to many and keeps the Cathedral funded, nickel at a time. There is always the practicality of raising funds, even today, to build and maintain the Cathedral, but the Cathedral rhetoric always focuses on service to the people rather than itself during times of great spiritual neediness. For the duration of World War II, WNC focuses on service, unity, cathedrals around the world facing harm from the war, and the (im)morality of war. The growth of Washington, D.C. spurred by war preparations during the war inspired tourism at the Cathedral at a time important to both the people of the nation and the Cathedral. President Roosevelt, as will be noted in section 5.3, soon realized the potentialities of Washington Cathedral in a time crying out for divine solace in a world filled with the most grotesque sense of fear.

5.3 From a National Foundation to a Christian Unity Foundation

Each bishop of Washington and each dean of the Cathedral leaves his and her imprint on the mission and vision of the Cathedral. Bishop Satterlee’s founding vision of the Cathedral as a “House of Prayer for All People” has never changed, but the meaning of “all people” has. Satterlee envisioned the Protestant Episcopal Church as the one best umbrella under which to unify the Protestant faith, and Bishop Harding did not change much of Satterlee’s ideals for unification; instead he focused on the architectural and theological ideologies of the Cathedral.

Bishop Freeman assumed the bishopric in 1923 just as the nation recovered from the (first) Great War and leading into the financially generous 1920s. He continued as bishop of
Washington, working with Cathedral Dean (the Very Rev.) George Bratenahl through Bratenahl’s death in 1936, through Dean (the Very Rev.) Noble Powell to Powell’s death in 1941, through Dean (the Very Rev.) ZeBarney Phillips to Phillips death in 1941, and into service with Cathedral Dean (the Very Rev.) John Suter. Bishop Freeman’s twenty year service is the longest bishopric for Washington and WNC, taking the Cathedral from one distinct era to another. His imprint on the Cathedral is enormous. Bishop Freeman died in 1943 after launching *The Cathedral Age* in 1925, ensuring the architectural genius of Frohman, building through the Great Depression, and overseeing the Cathedral assume the national purposes for which it was originally designed, beginning with the encouragement of a strong tourist element and patriotic service to the nation. He also began the transition of rhetoric of Washington Cathedral from a sisterhood of Protestantism to a sisterhood of nations to a spiritual home for the land of the free and home of the brave.

*The Cathedral Age*, although a subscription magazine for friends of the Cathedral, is a treasure-hold of essays reflecting a strong allegiance to the use of the Cathedral for the spiritual needs of the nation. Co-founder of *The Cathedral Age* and Dean of the Graduate School of Journalism at Columbia University, Carl Ackerman wrote in 1938 that liberty is the central theme of American life. Liberty is central not because it is a divine right, for it is not, but because liberty is dependent on the “thousands of communities and millions of homes by the ‘multitudes’” of the nation. In other words, we are only free to the extent that we, as a national people, allow we ought to be free. That value of liberty ought to “lift our national spirit to heroic heights,” and in that lifting, all our other freedoms—speech, religion, press, and assem-
bly, etc.—are also lifted. At the outset of war in Europe, even though American isolation is still assumed by many, the specter of fear and loss is very real in the United States. The inward philosophical turn is a natural response. Being fraternal with other nations forces the realization of connectedness. What Europe feels, America feels. At the same time, our own belly button, in the best metaphoric sense, becomes very important to us as our own national woes arising from the Great Depression become all-consuming.

The inward focus especially on those liberties that define us, the Bill of Rights, is warranted for the Cathedral. Not quite halfway completed, the massive and massively expensive structure overlooking the seat of national government has much to lose with a loss of freedoms that the war in Europe and the threats of fascism and communism suggest. As Ackerman plainly states,

Nations fight today with new weapons which destroy morale, confidence, faith, family and spiritual relationships...The massive walls of this Cathedral cannot protect us from attack by these new weapons...unless we are prepared to defend ourselves with these modern weapons. The modern weapons are words and ideas collected and distributed by the instrumentalities of communication—the printing press, the radio and the motion picture—to the market places, to the community centers of the nation.98

This inward turn, considering what Americans call dear, and how we communicate national values is new in Cathedral rhetoric. That we are a Christian nation is mostly assumed by much Cathedral discourse; however, the rise and threats in Europe of fascism and communism loom large in the late 1930s making the threat of atheism real. In his essay, Ackerman admonishes

---

that the Cathedral cannot assume its massive presence using assumed guarantees for its own existence. Washington Cathedral must enter the world, for although the architecture is medieval Gothic, the function of the Cathedral is to serve a modern and moral people. Further, in 1938, the focus must be on the people and what Americans do with their freedoms rather than on “what dictators are doing abroad.”

While an internal impulse in international affairs is important in defining exactly what Americans will eventually fight for, there is still much work for WNC in becoming national in ecumenical and interfaith perspectives. The need for a brotherhood of faiths, united in purpose at a time when freedoms long thought guaranteed are threatened, cannot be ignored. Reaching out to as many faiths as possible, Bishop Freeman worked to keep faith dialogues open, inviting an assortment of ecumenical voices at Cathedral services. Freeman was especially friendly toward his Jewish brethren, especially as news arrived of their treatment at the hands of the German Hitler.

Hitler invaded Austria in March 1938, and within days of the invasion, word arrived of Jewish atrocities far beyond his already wretched approach to the Hebrew people living in Germany (Kennedy, 1999). Jews, by the thousands, applied for U.S. visas, but immigration law only allowed 850 per month, leaving a horrendous backlog of applications as over three thousand applied each day. Although sympathetic to Jewish plight in Germany and Austria, the reality of racial genocide at the hands of Germans remained outside American comprehension (Kennedy, 1999, p. 410). As late as 1938, four separate polls revealed that “between 70 and 85 percent of the American public opposed increasing the already drastically restrictive quotas to help refugees” (Wistrich, 1991). Within the U.S., there was a sentiment similar to the earlier
Roman Catholic strife just fifty years earlier. There appeared a difference between recent Eastern European Jews and the Western European Jewish immigrants of the nineteenth century just as there was a difference between the Roman Catholics emigrating from Eastern Europe and previous Western European Catholic immigrants (Wistrich, 1991). There was not a unified Jewish voice in the U.S. and this also did not help the Jewish situation either in Europe or in the United States. From the beginning, however, Washington Cathedral extended great sympathy and generosity toward the Jewish community, especially in Washington. Invitations for prayer and sermons flowed between WNC and the Washington Hebrew Congregation (WHC), and the Jewish community regularly held services on the Cathedral grounds during their expansion in the mid-1950s, making the two congregations permanent friends.99

At the outbreak of the war in Europe, Canon of Washington Cathedral, the Rev. Anson Stokes, spoke at the Sabbath service of the Temple of the WHC. Desirous of bringing a message of unity between all faithful peoples, Canon Stokes focuses on the commonality of God, the Holy Scriptures, and a moral code.101 Using these as the ties that bind rather than separate, Stokes offers the WHC congregants the advice of two warnings and two positive suggestions. First, he tells this Jewish congregation, at the invitation of their rabbi, Abram Simon, not to lose faith in God or man, and second, not to fall into the habit of condemning a whole nation of the

---

99 In an interesting corollary to WNC’s history, Washington Hebrew Congregation (WHC) was also chartered by Congress in 1856, the only Jewish congregation in America to enjoy this distinction. President McKinley laid the cornerstone for the second building the congregation built and President Truman laid the cornerstone for the current building in 1952. President Eisenhower dedicated the newly completed synagogue in 1955.

100 A Canon, in the singular, is either a law or rule (see below) or a person. A person referred to as a Canon may be a member of a chapter or college of priests, typically the chapter of a cathedral. It is sometimes used as an honorary title bestowed on a person who is not a priest but who does faithful work in support of the church. See http://anglican.org/vocab/abcde.html.

101 Given in a radio address delivered by the Reverend Anson Phelps Stokes, Secretary of the Committee on Religious Life in the Nation’s Capital, over Station WMAL—the “Evening Star Station”—in Washington on November 19, 1938, a few weeks before Rabbi Abram Simon passed away. The Evening Star, a.k.a. The Washington Star, was the newspaper of record in Washington, D.C. from 1852-1981, when it filed for bankruptcy.
cruel intolerance of certain individuals. His two positive suggestions are to study the causes of antagonism to the Jews and to remove them and, of course, to overcome evil through good. Stokes warnings and advice smack of paternalistic jingoism; however, Stokes admits that “We as a people are inclined, in spite of all our virtues, to be intellectually superficial, rather boastful and jingoistic, and far too often financially and politically dishonest.” His “helpful suggestions” are an admonition to not hide behind the wall of self-proclaimed self-righteousness and indignation regarding Hitler’s actions in Germany and Austria toward the Jews. The Cathedral, as it stands in 1938, only less than half built, has thus begun a campaign to speak of unity and commonalities, not only in religious faith, but especially in the religious foundation of American ideals. Stokes offers an anecdote of his youth wherein he remembers “with deep gratitude” his Jewish friends, who through “uprightness and unselfish patriotism” overcame prejudices and earning absolute respect. God and country are equally important in establishing unity. As Bishop Freeman later states, “the separation of church and state is no implied divorce.” Their interests are identical: world peace and personal safety—of the person and the soul. Too much uncontrolled power of either church or state leaves an imbalance, ultimately offering neither peace nor safety. Too much nationalism—all country, flag, and George Washington—results with peace and safety attaining only the barest level of moral conviction; while too much religiosity—all Bible, God, and prayer—results in prejudice, sanctimony, and irrationality. All easier said than done, of course, but the obvious attempt to create a brotherhood between the faiths is evident even if it sounds moralistic and grossly simplistic.

---

A year later, Freeman laments that the greatest crisis of 1939 is that some, perhaps many, demand the claims of the cross become subordinate to the claims of the state since the religious and moral impulse is generally against war and violence. For the most part, the religious community decried the impending entry of the U.S. into the war, and many religious were quite outspoken in their opposition. The Cathedral, trying so hard to combine the two, to show how the two, church and state, belong together working in unity, must avow an equality, not a subordination. This extends beyond the relationship between church and state; this relationship must be between all people. Unity rhetoric is a strong theme for Freeman.

In fact, the rhetoric from the Cathedral demands an open door to all people of all faiths, recognizing that there are people with no faith at all who may still seek solace in times of war. The Church, Freeman exclaims, sees war not as the heroic and chivalric duty of the past, but as wholesale murder with weaponry meant to kill blindly all in its path without discrimination. It is not man power or wealth that will save the world or the U.S.; it is, as always, the moral character of the nation’s people that will save the world and the United States. Patriotism is not enough because it is not enduring or eternal; rather, it is fickle and finite. Freeman felt so strongly about the loss of morality, or the potential loss of morality, that he instituted a monthly “United Services” in 1941, in which various Christian organizations were invited to pray in the Cathedral together in faithful unity. The Cathedral, along with the Washington Federation of Churches, brought “outstanding speakers” from both clergy and lay persons to discuss “the broader usefulness and functions of the church in time of national crisis.”

---

faithful might “provoke a fine spirit of comradeship and cooperation among all the churches of Washington.” He is speaking here of Washington churches, however, there is an implication that the dialogue is for the benefit of all Christian churches since the major denominations had “national” churches in Washington. Dr. Oscar Blackwelder, president of the Washington Federation of Churches, in the same article, states that the work done by the Cathedral in gathering these Christian voices makes “The Cathedral...even more fully a focal point for cooperative Christianity.” The Rev. Frederick Harris, chairman of the Public Meetings Committee of the Washington Federation of Churches adds that “In the eyes of the nation the Washington Cathedral is our most inspiring symbol of things unseen and eternal.” The United Services are an outgrowth of work by former U.S. Senator George Wharton Pepper to expand the influence of the Cathedral in the public eye during the war.

Freeman’s perception of the destruction by division from within, the loss of unity over specificity, is a matter of man’s own limitations. In times of peace, division can be balanced as long as there are those minimal rules—secular laws—to safeguard the peace. When those laws, as minimal standards, prove ineffective or inefficient, divisions create chaos. Crisis reveals internal weaknesses. As a nation and as a people, crises bring out both the best and worst of our reliance and belief in American ideals. Freeman, in advancing the United Services, worries that the current war will change forever the very fabric of national ideals unless they are shown to be ultimately valued. He states that, “We are in the war because we believe that the most sacred of our institutions are threatened and that any failure to maintain our course may subject the Church, and I mean all Churches, to a condition in which their beneficent service shall
be rendered impotent.” In this sense only is war justified for the Church. Not only must the military fight for the freedoms now taken for granted, religion must support that fight. The fight, however, is for a self-preservation of a cherished American ideal and not necessarily for the benefit of political balance or dominance around the world. At first, only the Presbyterian Church joined wholeheartedly in the United Services, but that soon changed. Freeman’s call to unity spoke of both the valued differences between the faiths and the commonalities, choosing the ultimate value of commonalities. As he affirms, unity must begin somewhere, and Freeman is adamant in the role of Washington Cathedral, as the most nationally narrativized church, as that beginning. With great passion he declares,

Let us believe, and believe deeply that, we have entered into a new fullness of time.

Nothing that we may do will stay the changes that are impending. We shall have to recast many of our long-cherished ideas and concepts. We shall have to change the ways and practices of many of our institutions—domestic, social and economic. There is a ferment in the world today that is heaving the ancient crusts; it is a ferment so mighty in its potentiality that it may issue in a reconstruction and reordering of many of our time-honored institutions. Nothing could be more tragic than to attempt to resist forces that, under God, may usher in a new world, more consistent, more true to the Divine pattern, than any that has gone before. We need to unbar the windows of our souls and of our minds today. We need to set all the Christian forces at work to help shape a new world that is struggling to be born.  

---

There is prophecy in his words and his interpretation of how Washington Cathedral is meant to be the impetus of that modern change, that modern sense of Christian unity, that the war will inevitably usher in, wanted or not, as is seen in Bishop Freeman’s vision of the usefulness of a national cathedral in a post-modern world. There is in the rhetoric of Cathedral sermons and articles a great fear of apostasy and secularism gone awry. For this reason, Washington Cathedral stands for Christian unity for it is, as Freeman ends, “the unity of Christendom that is the bright hope of a distracted and confused world.” There is no conception, apparently, of a certain level of hypocrisy in the role of Christian men in creating the war situation. Nor is there any hint of confusion in a rhetoric that denies inclusion for the close friends at Washington Hebrew Congregation. Bishop Freeman speaks from the comfort of the nation’s erstwhile national house of prayer.

5.4 National Prayer Services: America’s Westminster Abbey

On December 28, 1965, Westminster Abbey in London celebrated its 900th anniversary, marking its foundation by Edward the Confessor. In commemoration of that event, an impressive 464-page book was written with the collaboration of eleven authors. Beginning in the year 1066 A.D., the book describes the history, architecture, and lore of the Collegiate Church of St. Peter (Westminster Abbey’s formal name) in London. To place the references made since Bishop Satterlee equating WNC with Britain’s Westminster Abbey in perspective, it is wise to remember that the Abbey constitutes almost a thousand years of British history. All of its crowned monarchs have held their coronations at Westminster and the place is steeped in this ritual and pageantry. Westminster Abbey is the final resting place of the kings and queens of England, of patriots and of poets. A large part of its heritage is assumed simply because it re-
sides so intimately with the seat of government (Westminster Abbey, 1966; Carpenter, 1966).

Particularly apropos to my project, is a comment in Carpenter’s 900th anniversary text wherein it is written a lamentation of the problem of past history and contemporary history: lost records and too many records. For Westminster Abbey, he states,

The Abbey illustrates this well. Many monuments have been erected to poets of whom nobody now reads a line. And as to what is being done today, the Dean and Chapter must tremble at the certainty that sooner or later some of their work will be described as absolutely wicked. They will probably be blamed for not having added anything contemporary to the fabric; yet if they had done so, their taste might presently be judged to be as desperately awry as the taste of those who paneled the Sacrarium in the eighteenth-century manner (Carpenter, 1966, p. 342).

Knowing what must be put in and what can be left aside is an unnerving responsibility. At the end of a thousand years, in 2907 A.D. (a radically incomprehensible date for us now), determining what part of WNC’s rhetorical history is truly relevant will be the unlucky job of some intellectual. For now, I trace a mere one hundred years, and yet already there is far too much to tell. Figuring large, however, throughout the Cathedral’s history is the idea of Washington Cathedral playing a role in the United States comparable to Westminster Abbey’s in Great Britain.

Satterlee’s original vision of the Cathedral as a sort of Westminster Abbey, at first, seemed presumptuous considering our history and allegiance to the separation of church and state. But that burning vision of a great temple for national purposes, such as state funerals,

107 The Sacrarium at Westminster Abbey is that place between the high altar and the choir where coronations are staged. It is thus also referred to as “the Coronation Theatre.” The Sacrarium is ornate and covered in gold gilt. Generally, a sacrarium (small ‘s’) is a special sink located in the sacristy, or place of vestment, with a drain that leads directly to bare consecrated earth rather than a sewer. Consecrated wine and bread that are left over from communion are disposed of through the sacrarium.
has always been a part of the Cathedral narrative, even though the term of ‘Westminster Abbey’ has not always been a welcome one. Long before ground was ever broken for the Cathedral, Bishop Satterlee offered the Cathedral’s first of seven Presidential memorial services. President McKinley was assassinated in September 1901 and Satterlee officiated and gave the memorial address at a service held at St. Mark’s Pro-Cathedral at Capitol Hill. The Cathedral has since been in service for eleven of the nation’s twenty one presidents since 1901. Additionally, the Cathedral has been home to various prayer services for war and disaster at the request of the various Presidents. That the Cathedral has been used so frequently, especially since Franklin Roosevelt’s presidency, attests to the success of the Cathedral to create its use and image as that place George Washington and Pierre L’Enfant envisioned for national purposes.

Life was much more tenuous prior to the medical advances of the Second World War. Between 1901 and 1933, the nation lost Presidents McKinley (1901), T. Roosevelt (1919), Harding (1923), Wilson (1924), Taft (1930), and Coolidge (1933). The Cathedral has been the site of only three state funerals, for Eisenhower in 1969, Reagan in 2004, and Ford in 2007 (Franklin Roosevelt’s funeral was held at the White House, but officiated by Bishop Dun) and one official burial on site (for Wilson in 1924), but the Cathedral has in some way been a part of the funerals or memorial services for Presidents Kennedy, Truman, Johnson, and Nixon. Since its beginning, the Cathedral has not participated in only two Presidential funerals: Theodore Roosevelt in 1919 and Herbert Hoover in 1964. This is not to say that other churches have not participated in memorial services for Presidents, and obviously, as only three have used the Cathedral for

108 A pro-cathedral is a parish church used as a cathedral until the cathedral can be used for services. St. Mark’s served as WNC’s pro-cathedral until 1912 when the Bethlehem Chapel was completed.
state funeral services, other churches have been active in serving our nation’s Presidents in their final moment. The difference seems to be more marked in the last two decades in how the Cathedral has become more unquestioned as the national temple for those purposes and more will be said on this in Chapter 7. For now, it is with FDR’s use of the Cathedral for his inaugural prayer services, rather than his funeral, that begins the rhetorical construction of WNC’s rise to national temple status and conferring its “Westminster” typecasting.

In a 1933 Cathedral memorandum to Washington’s three newspapers, the *Times-Herald*, *Evening Star*, and *Post*, plans for “a national patriotic service on the occasion of the Inauguration of the Honorable Franklin Delano Roosevelt as President” was announced.¹⁰⁹ Planned for Sunday, March 5, 1933, officiated by Bishop Freeman, and held in the Great Choir, this was to be the Cathedral’s first service associated with presidential inaugurations. The memorandum announced that special invitations were sent to the Governors of each state, members of the Diplomatic Corps, National Democratic Committee, the Presidential electors, the Executive Committee members of the Inauguration Committee, the wives of the Presidents (at this time, only Hoover was still living after Coolidge died in January 1933¹¹⁰), and members of the new President’s family. When the memo was sent, the Cathedral had already received over three hundred acceptances for the service, a sign that this service was considered appropriate. President Roosevelt did not attend the service because inaugural events had not yet ended (Presidential inaugurals, 2013).

¹⁰⁹ “Memorandum on Cathedral service in honor of President Roosevelt’s inauguration.” WNC ChA: j. 132, b. 1, f. 10.
¹¹⁰ Hoover and FDR were not on speaking terms and were generally antagonistic towards each other having fundamentally opposing views of how to best address the deplorable economy. Hoover, however, did attend the inaugural services held the previous day, 4 March.
The service, initiated by Roosevelt but planned by the Cathedral, was simple and ecumenical, in a sense. Clergy from other Christian faiths and heads of universities in Washington, D.C. were welcomed to process with Bishop Freeman and Cathedral clergy. Even though Bishop Freeman gave the sermon, the Chaplains of the Senate (the Rev. Dr. ZeBarney Phillips, later Dean of WNC) and House of Representatives (the Rev. Dr. James Shera Montgomery, a Methodist minister) read the Scripture lessons—this was the limitation of this service’s ecumenism. The music was spiritually inspirational, even the “Star Spangled Banner” sung immediately following Freeman’s sermon. The memo declared the final recessional song, “Faith of Our Fathers,” as stirring, surely meant to figuratively answer the call of religious unity.

The entire national patriotic service most likely did not last more than forty five minutes or an hour. Secret Service was not in place until 1960 and so security was not an issue, but the Cathedral set itself up to be the proper entity through the call to ecumenical unity in offering these patriotic services during Roosevelt’s tenure. Annual “patriotic services” were held for the four years of his first term and for the first year of his second term, and Roosevelt did attend those other national patriotic services. Due to health reasons, Roosevelt only attended services at St. John’s Church on Lafayette Square for his 1941 and 1945 inaugurals. All of these prayer services, according to his wife, Eleanor, were at FDR’s insistence because “he could pray for help and guidance and have faith in his own judgment as a result. The church services that he always insisted on holding on Inauguration Day, anniversaries, and whenever a great crisis impending, were the result of his religious faith” (as quoted in Leuchtenburg, 1995, p. 9). Having a President who is Episcopalian at this time of national crisis was instrumental for the Cathedral, and both Bishop Freeman and his successor, Angus Dun, saw the hand of God in that coinci-
dence. These patriotic services are the first instances of an inaugural prayer service given, not as part of the inauguration ceremony, but distinct from the inauguration ceremony.\footnote{In fact, WNC has never officially participated in the inauguration day ceremonies. Dean Sayre was asked to give the benediction for Kennedy, but he declined because he planned to be in the Middle East on his refugee ministry and World Refugee Year duties. Certainly in this sense, WNC has not been a part of the civil-religious aspects of presidential inaugurations.}

Prayer services, in the general sense, had been held at Washington Cathedral since the Peace Cross ceremony in 1898. Praying for peace is what has certainly defined the Cathedral. Likewise, Washington Cathedral was no stranger to praying for the war dead, of course; after the Great War (WWI), Cathedral Bishops participated in the massing of military color standards held at Arlington Cemetery. In 1931, there is record of Bishop Freeman participating in the traditional massing of colors held at Washington Cathedral (Massed colors pay honor to war dead, 1931) instead of Arlington Cemetery. Attended by the Secretary of State, the Attorney General, Belgian and Argentine ambassadors, Mrs. Woodrow Wilson, Mrs. Howard Taft, Army, Navy, and Marine Corps officers, and President Hoover’s military aide, color guards from various organizations, Cathedral clergy marched down the Cathedral’s Pilgrim Steps to a great golden cross at an altar, called “The Rustic Altar,” located in the South Transept. Still mourning the millions dead from WWI, Bishop Freeman lambasted gang warfare and the lawlessness of the time that resulted from Prohibition. Blaming Americans for the “lukewarm supineness” of thought regarding the lawlessness of prohibition, Freeman took the citizenry to task stating, “It is a cheap and blatant patriotism that does not endeavor to translate into the conduct of the present the ideals of the past” (Massed colors, 1931). As always, those surviving the slaughterings of war continue to live and soon forget the cost of living in a free society, and this worried Freeman who understood that for Washington Cathedral, freedom equates to the continued freedom of
religion. Not that this freedom is isolated in its value, but that freedom of religion allows for a society to remember the roots of its ideals as religious. There must be, for Freeman, those willing to be the ever-vigilant watch guards for freedom and democracy.

Thereafter, Washington Cathedral became the scene for these color masses. In 1934, the service gathered at the Peace Cross and Admiral Standley, Chief of Naval Operations, delivered a commemorative address just before Bishop Freeman delivered the sermon. The main difference between this service and the one in 1931 was that a portion of the service was radio broadcast. Freeman supported the use of modern technology to achieve the goal of placing the Cathedral in the public mind.

Already at the advantage of film courtesy of General Pershing in 1930, adding radio to broadcast the sermons and songs is meant to not only spread The Word, but also the ideal of WNC as an “American Westminster Abbey,” that receptacle of national regalism. Radio as a means to reach the larger public by a President goes back to 1923 when President Coolidge gave his State of the Union address, and Roosevelt commonly used radio broadcast during his governorship in New York. Radio as the modern form of mass communication was at an all-time high in the 1930s. Whereas in 1930 around twelve million households owned a radio, by 1939 over twenty eight million did (Radio in the 1930s, 2011). Roosevelt’s “Fireside Chats” beginning in 1933 at the very beginning of his presidency encouraged a population to anticipate messages, untouched by journalists, bringing those far away in high places right into the family living room. The Mass of Colors in 1934, right from the Cathedral grounds, was brought into millions of living rooms of people who might not have heard of the Cathedral before.
Roosevelt also occasionally attended services at Washington Cathedral. About five weeks after his inauguration, the Roosevelt’s attended Easter services in Washington Cathedral accompanied by over two thousand worshippers and pilgrims (President attends Easter services, 1933). Recorded in the New York Times on March 9, 1936, Bishop Freeman advised the President, the Vice President, and members of the Cabinet, at the completion of Roosevelt’s third year of his first term, to “seek God’s guidance by remembering that God is “the way and the truth” (President at Cathedral, 1936). Although these services were not radio broadcast, they were recorded as part of the public record. The occasion of the President or his wife arriving at a Cathedral function is cause for the press to follow and public notice is taken of not only the Cathedral for those outside of Washington, D.C., but also those national occasions for which the Cathedral is used.

Although all of President Roosevelt’s personal journeys to the Cathedral were not recorded or broadcast, the Cathedral did continue to broadcast certain services, such as the First National Church Sunday service on June 16, 1935. This ecumenical service brought together the American Legion, clergy from the Lutheran Church, the chaplains of the Senate and House of Representatives, and the national chaplain of the Jewish War Veterans asking clergy of all faiths to join in unified voice for peace “mutual understanding and regard” (Pledge the nation at Legion service, 1935). In this service, broadcast by the National Broadcast Company (NBC), Legionnaires and clergy together asked for “patriotic devotion to the obligations of citizenship, constructive community enterprise, deeper national consciousness, and larger international understanding and a better America for the future.”
As war became more evident, prayers increased at the Cathedral, but did not become formal prayer services until the “United Services,” along with the outdoor and military services, were instituted at the Cathedral in 1942. In 1943, with U.S. entry into the war, the “Cathedral Fellowship of Prayer” began daily at noon calling the nation’s people to stop wherever they are to join in a prayer written by the Cathedral. The daily prayer offered states,

Almighty God, we commit our country to Thy holy keeping in the fiery trials of war.

Strengthen and protect those who serve in the Armed Forces, those who labor in field and factory, and those who maintain the front at home. Guide all who are set in authority over us; bless all ministers of mercy; comfort the lonely and the bereaved. Give to each of us a sense of mutual service and hasten the advent of a just and righteous peace. We pray in His Name who gave His life for us all, Thy son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.\textsuperscript{112}

A rich mix of church and state, if the prayer was publically broadcast daily at noon, this would have been a powerful prayer offered by the Cathedral; however, published in the Spring 1943 Cathedral Age, there is no mention how the prayer was disseminated. A year later, as counterpart to President Roosevelt’s D-Day Prayer on June 6, 1944, newly consecrated Bishop of Washington, Angus Dun offered an “Invasion Day Message (Appendix L).” President Roosevelt’s prayer was half-prayer, half-speech mentioning that victory will not be swift and we will lose many of the sons sent into battle. He mentions that many people wanted him to ask for the call to a National Day of Prayer, but he rejects the idea and instead calls for a continuous stream of prayer from the people, rather than just a day (Franklin Roosevelt’s D-Day Prayer, 1944). Bish-

op Dun, on the other hand, prays that the anticipated course of action for the nation is now totally dependent on the will of God. More redemptive than Roosevelt, Dun asks for victory, “the triumph of good over evil, of freedom over slavery, of decency over brutality, and of order over chaos.”\(^{113}\) Other than the one greeting to Almighty God at the beginning of the prayer, Roosevelt does not mention the deity to which he prays, while Bishop Dun invokes God directly five times. Offered at approximately the same time, the two prayers offered by the two Episcopalians, reveal how the Cathedral rhetoric maintains its spiritual appeal in the protection of the nation. To ask for victory is not to assume victory, and neither man assumes victory; but each man understands victory in a different way. The reality of impending physical death is not part of the Cathedral prayer as it is in Roosevelt’s; rather, Bishop Dun acknowledges the fears of those left behind and those who offered their loved one into the service of the nation. Whereas before the prayers of the Cathedral have been for those who died in the first Great War, now the Cathedral asks that the lessons learned from that horrific slaughter are not forgotten and that mercy reigns in all actions; it is a prayer for the living. After continuous rhetoric for peace after WWI, the Cathedral does not now pray for war or warriors. Bishop Dun’s prayers ask that Americans, both those going off to war and those remaining behind, remember God in the fight.

In an article in the same issue as the Invasion Day Prayer, Bishop Dun writes that the Cathedral, as the spiritual helm of the nation, reminds those who see and enter it that “this majestic symbol can testify that there is something to be reckoned with beside Commerce or Agri-

culture or man-made law or human Justice.” Notice that Bishop Dun assumes the nature of the Cathedral as at “the spiritual helm.” The majestic cathedral is portrayed as independent, peaceful, unifying, and conscientious in all actions toward the people it serves. The Cathedral continually prays for all people, especially those who pay the ultimate price of ensuring the freedom of the church to exist, thus recognizing a form of “just war.” The Cathedral offers prayer for various leaders of the nation and world, both in thanksgiving and in memorializations for their lives as public servants, as The Book of Common Prayer has always included prayers for world leaders and governments. What now changes is that the Cathedral keeps the patriotic dead in constant vigil in memorial services and in chapels and stained-glass windows. The Cathedral has assumed a greater sense of the national character that any other church of any other denomination in D.C. This national aspect has been broadcast in film and radio and publicized in print media. Washington Cathedral also took credit for being the chosen place of honor for Roosevelt’s prayer services and for being the instigator of ecumenical dialogue and cooperation.

The defining of WNC as “America’s Westminster Abbey” has been a slow process and certainly not achieved in one Bishop’s term, or one lifetime, and maybe not even within one hundred years; and, in fact, there is reason to believe that WNC has grown beyond this simple sense. But for several more decades the Cathedral continuously keeps building onto that reputation. Serving as the religious home for prayer for the patriotic dead, for inaugural prayer services, and prayer for the nation’s patriotic fighters, the Cathedral also grows in religious continuity and pageantry.

---

Not so much a prayer service, but a ceremonial ritual steeped in history and pageantry, the consecration of the Rt. Rev. Angus Dun on April 19, 1944 was covered by Life Magazine. Bought in 1936 by Henry Luce, Life was America’s first all photographic magazine with pictures often printed in color. As a photographic magazine, Life told stories visually and Dun’s bishopric consecration was a seven-page spread. Of course, as a photographic periodical, there was little accompanying story, only one short paragraph stating that Bishop Dun was known as a more liberally-minded priest. Circulation for Life, being wider than The Cathedral Age, means that there is greater chance of exposure to a wider audience (not that Life was the only media covering the consecration), and during World War II this included overseas. By way of example, there is one anecdote mentioned in the Summer 1944 Cathedral Age of the Rt. Rev. Henry Wise Hobson, Bishop of Southern Ohio, who while serving with the 1st Army in Belgium, was granted a day’s trip to visit Aachen, Germany. While there, he had a conversation with one of the Canons of the (Roman Catholic) cathedral at Aachen who had remained there during the recent siege. The story keeps the Canon’s name untold, perhaps because it was irrelevant to the point of the story, but tells that the priest had earlier seen the article of Bishop Dun’s consecration in Life and he was enthusiastic to learn that the bishop standing before him was at that very consecration. Said the Canon, “Yesterday I was looking at the pictures, which were ‘wunderbar,’ and reading the story of this consecration in a copy of Life Magazine which was left here in Aachen by one of your American soldiers...I want to know more about that service, your Church,

---

116 The cathedral in Aachen, known as “The Imperial Cathedral” and “The Royal Cathedral of St. Mary of Aachen,” is the burial home of Charlemagne and the coronation home of thirty kings and twelve queens, a sort of German “Westminster Abbey.” It was also the site of a major battle only two months prior to the Bishop of Southern Ohio’s visit.
117 A German expression for the English word ‘wonderful.’
and the beautiful Washington Cathedral.\footnote{Henry W. Hobson, “Consecration story read in Aachen,” \textit{The Cathedral Age}, 1945, vol. XX, no. 1, p. 30.} Bishop Hobson relates that he then spoke for ten minutes, answering the Canon’s questions, all the while being conscious of the strange bonds that keep men together even in the most unlikely places and times such as in the remote and war-torn town of Aachen, Germany. In this instance, the Cathedral’s story is told not by one from WNC, but by one incidental to it, indicating that its narrative has translated nationally within the Episcopal Church. Coverage of Bishop Dun’s consecration is seen not for the fact that a bishop was ordained, but that the ordination occurred specifically inside Washington Cathedral. The article offered little story about the bishop’s consecration; instead it offered a pictorial of the pageantry that occurred inside this cathedral in a way comparable to the consecration ceremonies that occur in Westminster Abbey when a British monarch is crowned and consecrated.

\textit{Life’s} article shows that beyond the physical home of Washington Cathedral, there is a curiosity for the massive Gothic and massively beautiful and expansive Cathedral slowly being built in Washington, D.C. \textit{Time} magazine has been covering the building of the Cathedral at least since 1927, but the pictorial coverage of \textit{Life} added a visual element of the majesty and beauty of the interior of the Cathedral, along with the familiarity, for some, and the mystery, for others, of the consecration ceremony.\footnote{I do not explore here why \textit{Life} or any other media chose to cover Dun’s consecration, but I would encourage discovery on which religious events such as this were or are covered to such an extent. That local media would cover these events seems appropriate, but I would venture to say that WNC has gone to a great extent to publicize these events as belonging to the people of the nation as if to say they have a right to know who is holding the moral reigns of leaders working in the nation’s capital.}

Inviting the public into the Cathedral for an intimate ceremony such as a bishopric consecration is normal for the Episcopal Church. Certainly the faithful are always invited, but invit-
ing the completely secular and voyeuristic media is new. At the very least, it shows that there is
still much beauty, much mystery, and much still religious left in the war-torn world of 1944-45.
The very importance of things spiritual is never far from the Cathedral’s voice. If God does not
serve the people’s needs, as there are always those who disbelieve, then the Cathedral feels
free to add the patriotic voices of George Washington and Woodrow Wilson. But the most fre-
quently refrain from the Cathedral, at every chance it gets, is summed up by Bishop Dun when he
exhorts that “our civilization cannot survive materially unless it be redeemed spiritually.” This
is supported not only by the Cathedral in all its rhetoric, but also by many military voices and
by President Roosevelt, for example, in his D-Day Prayer. Forever in its rhetoric, the Cathedral
reminds all that it is primarily a house of prayer for all people and a place of moral renewal.

Although not officially used for national prayer during World War II, the Cathedral is
continuously busy during this time with the funerals and memorials for a great many national
heroes. In this sense, Washington Cathedral actively served as that “American Westminster
Abbey,” so long in the vision of its various bishops and deans. The litany of death for all church-
es increased during the war, but the Cathedral, in its effort to become the national church for
special purposes worked hard to present itself as the natural home for heroes. By 1946, the
Cathedral planned to honor all war heroes with a War Memorial Chapel (Shrine is planned to
honor war dead, 1946). Initiated by former Senator George Wharton Pepper(R-PA) and the

\[\text{\footnotesize \cite{footnote1}}\]

\[\text{\footnotesize \cite{footnote2}}\]

---

\[\text{\footnotesize \footnote{For example, General George Patton, worried about the lack of spirituality of men when bullets are not flying, wrote a prayer and Christmas greeting card to the Third Army in December 1944. See http://www.generalpatton.com/prayer/index.html for the text of the prayer.}}\]

\[\text{\footnotesize \footnote{Our modern sense of “The National Day of Prayer” was not put into place until 1952 when Congress, preoccupied with the Korean War and the “Communist menace” was eager to differentiate between Americans and Communists. One of the easiest forms of identification was through the auspices of religion. Congress then resolved “that the President shall set aside and proclaim a suitable day each year, other than a Sunday, as a National Day of Prayer, on which the people of the United States may turn to God in prayer and meditation at churches in groups, and as individuals” (Fox, 1972).}}\]
Very Rev. John Suter, dean of the Cathedral, the shrine was the first masonry work on the Cathedral since the United States entered the war. The War Chapel is located in the South Transept near the Children’s Chapel (see Appendix M[a]). The chapel is decorated with military insignia and holds a “Book of Remembrance” in which names of those killed in the war can be recorded and preserved within the walls of the Cathedral. According to Pepper, the shrine is meant to be the counterpart of the Unknown Soldier at Arlington Cemetery. Dedicated by President Eisenhower and Queen Elizabeth II in 1957, the chapel is a shrine holding the good and the bad of American military history. Containing several stained-glass windows depicting such events as Paul Revere’s ride, the battle of Iwo Jima, and the famous four war chaplains who sacrificed their lives in the sinking of USAT Dorchester in 1943, the windows show the willingness of the Cathedral to record all of American history. The “solemn religious services of prayer and dedication” for the War Memorial Chapel lasted a mere twenty minutes, but was accorded all the pomp and ceremony that the Cathedral was capable of supplying (Griffiths, 1957). Blending British history with American at the service, members of the British Commonwealth, with their colorful and flowing saris, draperies, and kilts, accompanied the royal pair of Queen Elizabeth II and her husband Phillip, along with the Archbishop of Canterbury, Geoffrey Fisher (Appendix N), all of whom commingled with the episcopal and Cathedral vestments.

122 Not to be outdone, the United Daughters of the Confederacy sponsored a memorial to General Robert E. Lee in 1949 to commemorate the heroes of the Confederacy—a part of our American history. The memorial, also located in the South Transept, was to contain a carving into the wall with an appropriate inscription. The original proposed niche was reduced to a stained-glass window. The D.O.C. were staunch believers that confederate ideals, even though they were at the losing end, ought to be commemorated, for Americans died to that cause. They used the example that in Great Britain, many memorials are given over to the story of the Barons of Runnemede, who started the trend of government now seen. But there are no memorials to those who stood with the king in 1215 even though they too had principles for which they were fighting. It is the example that the victors tell the tale. The D.O.C. wanted the story of those conquered also remembered (Virginia Historical Society, 1949).

123 After the terrorist events of 9/11, a Pentagon Cross was added to the chapel (Appendix M[b]).
This limited sense of “Westminsterism” for the Cathedral is later overwhelmed by the curiosities of American culture, as will be addressed in Chapter 8.2.

In the years immediately following World War II, Washington Cathedral reverted to cathedral building just as the rest of the nation reverted to nation building. But the attendant problems of the aftermath of global war soon became apparent. Continued building of the Cathedral was naturally important to the Cathedral, but the change in Cathedral personnel brought in a renewed sense of Social Gospel. The philosophy of being reserved for dealing with men’s souls, but not men’s politics, began to be questioned. Hitler’s madness against the Jews of his nation and conquered territories revealed a serious flaw in church-state theology. Beginning with Dean Sayre, the idea of keeping the state out of church regulation did not necessarily correspond with the equivalent requirement of keeping the church out of the state, out of law, or out of international affairs. The old ideology that claimed the Christianized man brought Christian law into the world through a moralized character no longer held. Obviously, an individual attending church or with strongly held Christian beliefs, is not necessarily a moral agent outside of church.

Dean Francis Sayre, whose ministry begins a new era in Cathedral rhetoric, was named dean in 1951 and was keenly aware of the role Washington Cathedral was meant to play in the American narrative. His work at the Cathedral became far more outwardly active than preceding deans of the Cathedral as will be seen in Chapter 6. However, there is one more special service the Cathedral participated in that helps explain the transition from an inward focus of World War II to an outward focus that is about to re-define the Cathedral: the World Refugee Year Service of 1959. World Refugee Year was an initiative by the United Nations covering the
year from 1959-1960 wherein mostly first world nations and many secular and faith-based non-governmental organizations attempted to bring awareness to the vast refugee situation that had grown out of the several wars the world over since World War II (Gatrell, 2011). While Cathedral dean, Sayre became aware of the abhorrent conditions and the needs of refugee camps when he visited Jordan and Lebanon in the summer of 1957 while a volunteer for the Inter-governmental committee for European Migration. In the winter of 1957 he inspected resettlement areas for Chinese and Russian refugees in Korea. Through Sayre’s efforts and a presentation before the U.N. in May, the U.N. General Assembly declared July 1, 1959-July 1, 1960 as World Refugee Year (WRY). Sayre devoted his Christmas sermon to WRY, making sure that the sermon was nationally televised by CBS. However, prior to that Christmas sermon, the Cathedral hosted a Special Litany for the Homeless on June 28, 1959.

Expanding beyond the close connection between the Episcopal and Anglican Churches and the friendship between the United States and Great Britain, the flags of the fifty-two nations participating in the WRY joined the Episcopal procession Sunday service. The flags were carried by persons who had at one time been refugees. The first lesson was read by the Rev. Zoltan Fule, Hungarian student at Union Theological Seminary, and the second reading was by the Honorable Ferenc Nagy, former Prime Minister of Hungary. In his sermon, Sayre exhorts that “The wandering, miserable masses of refugees in the world today are a judgment upon our wicked ways—ways of war and intrigue and blinded selfishness,” showing his willingness to speak outside the prescripted language of Cathedral rhetoric. In the past, various deans and bishops blasted modernity, materialism, technology, and even war, but never set the blame on

---

124 The following refers to an article in The Cathedral Age, titled “Dean Preaches at Service Marking Opening of world Refugee Year.” 1957, Vol. XXXI, no. 3, p. 3-4.
ourselves and “our wicked ways.” That we needed to be mindful of our American ideals, that
we needed to remember God, that we needed to change our ways, yes, these words had been
spoken from the Cathedral’s pulpit. Sayre, in the Litany for the Homeless of the World, howev-
er plainly blamed everyone, including Americans, in creating masses of humans with no place to
call home. He states that the ‘Wandering Jew’ of the past, a bad enough sin for the Christian,
now includes all of mankind. Where at one time a people condemned to exile, “ever seeking,
wistfully dreaming of asylum somewhere on the face of the globe,” now millions of people of
every race around the entire world seek asylum. Meanwhile, they reside in filthy slums without
water, electricity, or plumbing, without access to food, clothing, or education, without medical
care. Never mind their religious or spiritual needs. Sayre expels his frustration and anger as
well as his fervent prayer that, as with Noah, God will remember his covenant with his people
that “it shall come to pass, when I bring a cloud to pass over the earth, that the bow shall be
seen in the cloud.” 125 The Dean’s sermon did not specifically state that the rainbow after the
violent storm of the second World War was WNC, but there is hidden in his sermon the idea
that WNC is a part of the rainbow.

Lamenting the “wandering, miserable masses of refugees in the world today are as cer-
tainly a judgment upon our wicked ways,” Sayre then announced President Eisenhower’s pro-
clamation of U.S. participation in WRY, meant to “relieve the distress of our brethren who are
marooned from life in dank corners of the world.” He states that WRY must “look like a bow in
the sky, a sign of hope after the flood,” but continues that the idea alone will not be enough to
feed the masses yearning to be free. His use of the biblical trope that “bread alone is not

125 Gen. 9:14 [KJV].
enough” is his way of bringing into the conversation the duty residing within the Cathedral as well as all other Churches. Providing the bare necessities of life—bread, water, and shelter—is the minimal responsibility of governments, thus the refugee camps. To Sayre’s mind, the rainbow of God’s covenant is not provision of bare necessities; rather that rainbow is represented by a “key,” a key that can only be offered by the Christian faith.

Definitionally, “key” means something important, a tool used to open or unlock, of controlling access. Sayre tells of a refugee who, when interviewed and asked what he wants most of all in life, responds, “A key, a key to a door behind which I could have some privacy for myself and my family, a place where I could really make my home.” The metaphor of “a key” for the refugee is the means, not a tool to open out into the world, but to shut away the horror. The inability to go home, shut and lock the door, to keep others away, and not see what is going on outside is the worst part of being a refugee. Sayre turns the table around and tells his audience that as one of the privileged able to turn a key and not see, Americans are socially irresponsible. He claims that “wherever there is human misery, there is unrest in the world...and there can be no lasting peace until first the carpenters who have tools share their saws and hammers with carpenters who have no benches at all.” A world of people all turning keys to shut the world out is a world composed of misery. Keys, as a metaphor for power, or control, as the ability to both open and shut, imply a moral imperative.

The expression “power of the keys” refers to Christ’s directive to Peter found in Matthew 16:19 wherein Jesus says, “I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loosed on earth will be loosed in heaven.” Interpreted theologically as conferring the supreme authority of Peter and his succes-
sors on the Church, Sayre borrows the metaphor to confer moral and social responsibility on those with “keys,” or those with the power to open doors for others through the sharing of wealth. Those who have “keys” are morally required to help those who do not have “keys” to shut, much less open, doors.

Washington Cathedral, while always begging for money to complete the building, is a Cathedral that resides in the wealthiest nation on the planet and in that nation’s capital city. Set upon that hill, Washington Cathedral is a “key.” Sayre, in his sermon is taking on that moral imperative, to offer “keys” to those without and to be the “key” for those who need one. This directive is offered in his final words, when he reminds his audience of the woman at the well. The Gospel reading for the litany was John 4:14 about the woman at the well when Jesus claimed, “Take of me the water of life for whoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst!” Naturally, Sayre says, that when we drink earthly water, H2O, we live to thirst again. The water of Jesus is metaphoric, like the key. The Church is the water, and each of us are keys that invite others to come in to taste the water. Each droplet of water WNC scatters upon the people, people of all kinds, colors, and nationalities, creates the rainbow that represents God’s covenant. Washington Cathedral has a role far superior than to simply be a house of prayer, to be more than a beautiful Gothic cathedral; Washington Cathedral exists to be actively involved getting the nation’s people to be a moral people and to live up to their Christian duties and American ideals. The Cathedral is a symbol of moral action and it is to this action that the Cathedral now finds itself. For Sayre, Christian unity is not enough, moral superiority is not enough, dialoguing is not enough, and praying is not enough. Sayre brings a new way of considering the separation of church and state, and in so many ways he even blurs the
lines in consideration of religion’s moral imperative to serve the people as whole beings rather than as split secular and spiritual beings. This leads to the inseparability between Sayre and Washington Cathedral.
CHAPTER 6: DEAN FRANCIS SAYRE AND SOCIAL ACTIVISM—GIVING THANKS AND PRAISE THOUGH ACTION

6.1 Cathedral Dean, Francis B. Sayre’s Activism

“I don’t think man comes to faith firsthand except through despair, or to knowledge of God except through doubt. It has to be a kind of watershed experience.”

~Francis B. Sayre, Jr., Dean of Washington National Cathedral

His grandfather on his mother’s side was President Woodrow Wilson. Born in 1915 while grandpa was in office, he was the last baby to be born at the White House. Every aspect of his home town was familiar to him, including the rising Cathedral on the hill. Growing up, he was surrounded by the most powerful leaders in the country (Massie, 1963). His father was a Harvard lawyer, an assistant secretary of state in the 1930s, and U.S. High Commissioner to the Philippines during World War II. He was married to an Admiral’s daughter. He was raised in Cambridge (MA), France, and Thailand and educated at Williams College and Union Theological Seminary where his two influencing mentors were Paul Tillich and Reinhold Niebuhr (Francis B. Sayre, Jr., 1956). He served in the Navy Chaplain Corps during WWII aboard the U.S.S. San Francisco. He was named Dean of Washington National Cathedral at the age of thirty eight in 1951.

Sayre is quoted on the Cathedral website as saying that “Whoever is appointed as dean of the Cathedral has in his hand a marvelous instrument, and he’s a coward if he doesn’t use it” (Memorial service for the Very Reverend Francis B. Sayre, Jr., 2012). A man used to seeing

---

127 From various obituaries, as there is no one biographical source for Sayre. See http://wc.rootsweb.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/igm.cgi?op=GET&db=woodrow_wilson&id=I00010.
power played between powerful men could not be that kind of coward. So, Sayre played that hand, speaking loudly and often when others seemed afraid of their own moral voices.

From the Cathedral’s groundbreaking, and even before, the idea of “national cathedral” needed to be formed so as not to be confused with national church, a concept that beckons back to the bad old days of abuse and corruption. The first three bishops of Washington worked hard to fill in the blanks defining the character of Washington Cathedral so that all discourse corresponded to and included specific national narratives. In this way the Cathedral idea formed as the building formed. Leff and Utley allude to the fluidity of the construction of self through the use of persuasive ethos and constitutive persona of the rhetor (Leff & Utley, 2004). The use of rhetoric provides the means of self-identification, and although the rhetoric of the Cathedral is the result of those speaking for the Cathedral added to the physicality of the Cathedral, it is apparent already that Washington Cathedral has not only a presence because of over fifty years of construction and action, but also a forming national character. The persuasive character of the Cathedral, especially as Sayre sees it, is that of power. Sayre’s predecessors would say that the ethos of power associated with the Cathedral was one of spirituality and morality. Through the careful decisions of its clerical hierarchy and board of directors, its architects, the builders, and staff, Washington Cathedral had so far assumed a reassuring, comforting, healing, and inclusive [in the general sense of not denying access to anyone] persona. As it stood in 1953, only slightly half complete, the edifice was non-threatening and really quite a curious place. The power of the place was, as yet, underestimated because its persona was underutilized. As will be seen, Francis B. Sayre, Jr. saw Washington Cathedral differently; he saw it as a tool, an instrument of moral power. The Cathedral’s stored “national” ethos, for
Sayre, was a tool to be wielded so that the Cathedral can be more than just a place of comfort, healing, and dialogue; the Cathedral was an instrument of action. As a tool waiting to be used, as the headmaster of the toolbox, Sayre’s deanship began a more complex fluidity between his ethos as a priest and the ethos of the Cathedral as the national representative of morality and spirituality and the persona of Sayre as white, privileged, and radical aided and abetted by the persona of the Cathedral as comforting, healing, and dialogic. Now the power of the Cathedral becomes unlimited and constrained only by its own sense of morality and the limits of religion in post-World War II America.

The Very Rev. Sayre is known for his activism while Cathedral dean, to the great pride for some and with great disappointment for others. He was the first religious to speak out against Joseph McCarthy in 1954, he begged the U.N. to recognize the problem of the world’s war refugees, he was a fervent and outspoken advocate for civil rights, marching alongside Dr. Martin Luther King in Selma, and he stubbornly protested the Vietnam War. Many supported his ministry and many decried it, wondering why he did not stick to giving nice sermons and offering photo ops (Massie, 1963). But Sayre truly believed in his calling and the calling of the Cathedral as being more than just a spiritual home and a house of prayer—although, of course, it is always those. His faith, apparently born of a despairing moment, was strong and clear, and he was born into a race of powerful men. That was a message to him and he took that message to heart. Convinced that religion plays a powerful role in government, Sayre turned down two bishopric offers in other dioceses in order to create a specific kind of role for the cathedral dean of WNC (Massie, 1963)—the active dean for an active cathedral.
Sayre’s strong and personal convictions regarding WNC’s role is born out in his claim that “If the church is going to be relevant in the modern world, the clergy must engage themselves fully in the issues raised by modern society. Ministers should seek out issues, not avoid them” (Massie, 1963). As the nation’s most powerful pulpit, Sayre saw that WNC ought to be the beacon for other churches in how to engage modern society. Carrying Bishop Freeman’s charge taken from Chapter 5.3 that “we shall have to change the ways and practices of many of our institutions” and that “there is a ferment in the world today that is heaving the ancient crusts;” Sayre understands that WNC its role in light of that ferment because “it is a ferment so mighty in its potentiality that it may issue in a reconstruction and re-ordering of many of our time-honored institutions.”

6.1 Instance 1: Against Joe McCarthy

Named dean of the Cathedral in 1951 at the age of thirty-eight, Sayre began setting about his vision of the Cathedral as an active voice and participator in social issues. One of the first issues he tackled was Senator Joseph McCarthy’s “fantastic moment.” James Darsey, in his 1995 article illustrating McCarthy’s fantastic moment in an age “susceptible to the fantastic,” claims that McCarthy’s fantastic world was “his poor response to fear, and it is only when we recognize the fantastic as a form of spiritual impoverishment that we can properly evaluate what McCarthy wrought” (Darsey J., 2005, p. 444). Darsey does not reference Francis Sayre in his essay, however, Sayre could have led him easily to the same conclusion. On Sunday, February 22, 1953, Dean Sayre spoke from the Cathedral pulpit blasting both McCarthy and the public that feeds him. Claiming that McCarthy (and Rep. Harold Velde, (R) Illinois, who headed the

128 See page 135.
House Un-American Activities Committee) is “demonstrating that [he] believe[s] God and the nation are best served by the frightened and credulous collaborators of a servile brand of patriotism,” and that McCarthy’s claim that he knows what is best for America, assumes that McCarthy is “the divinely constituted guardian of other men’s consciences, other men’s patriotism or thoughts” (Episcopal dean lashes McCarthy, 1953). Further, Sayre proclaims from his pulpit that McCarthy’s actions and accusations smack of those past abuses of church rule our founding fathers fought so hard against when formulating and debating the Bills of Rights. McCarthy’s Machiavellian practices defied the very concept of individual rights, and seemingly for Sayre, both the government and a morally weak citizenry supported McCarthy’s fantastic machinations.

One year later, Dean Sayre switched pulpits with the dean of St. John the Divine in New York to continue the blasting of Senator McCarthy. Both deans said that “the American people are to blame for failure to curb the activities of Senator McCarthy;”¹²⁹ yet only Sayre, as dean of WNC, appears in the public record. Accusations by Sayre against McCarthy were biting and direct. Before his sermon Sayre laid out his justification for those accusations in an outline.¹³⁰ First, Sayre states that “The most successful lie is based on Truth” and that Christians are more profoundly opposed to Communism than any others because it is “a social tyranny over the human spirit.” Bishop Freeman justified supporting the government during the Second World War based on this argument which stated that the very securities of freedom, especially of religious worship, depended on the defeat of communism. Second, he follows the argument that the American public believes McCarthy’s lies because of “a certain Spiritual rootlessness” and a

¹³⁰Notes for McCarthy article. WNC ChA: Sayre Collection, unclassified folder, “McCarthyism.”
“Spiritual vacuum” that allows the devil in. He states a Bible story that claims when the devil is cast out of the home and nothing (holy) replaces it, then that vacuum allows “seven worse devils in.” What he bases his assertion of spiritual rootlessness and vacuum on is unknown.

Generally, church attendance as well as church planting boomed along with everything else in the 1950s (Beckman, 2000). But this only tells half the story. William Hutchison admits that a certain degree of religious sentiment after the Second World War was superficial noting that “celebrity religion” and “piety on the Potomac” merely reflected an “undemanding faith” that looked like a religious revival (Hutchison, 2003, p. 200). While there seemed to be a religious reawakening after the war, Sayre seems to be aware of the “piety of the Potomac” variety.

Between the two sermons, Sayre received many letters declaring that “we should accept a bad means for the sake of a good end” and “that we should put up with McCarthy, unpleasant and even wrong as he may be, in order to safeguard the general welfare from communism.” The responses to Sayre’s sermons from the two different pulpits are not unanimous in their ends-justify-the-means stances. He did receive supportive letters, but it is, perhaps, the vociferously Machiavellian letters that propels Sayre to make his second bold pronouncement against McCarthy.

In Sayre’s 1954 “Finger of God” sermon, he claims not to purposefully declare McCarthy a devil; he does not wish to give McCarthy that much credit. But he claims that McCarthy is playing the devil’s hand. Whereas God, in Gen. 18:26, would willingly spare Sodom, the ancient city of evil, if ten righteous people could be found, and whereas Jesus would leave the ninety-nine sheep to find the lost one, McCarthy would act in a diametrically opposite ideology. Sayre

---

132 Letters written to Sayre. Sayre Collection, WNC ChA: unclassified folders.
says, “If there are a few innocent that suffer, he has said it is for the common good. For the sake of ten guilty ones he will damn an army. For the sake of 20 he is willing to wreck a whole Administration. For the sake of 30 or 40 or 50 he will divide a nation right down to its democratic roots.” McCarthy “blooms like some unwelcome weed in an untended garden, for lack of better flowers and the strong hands of the gardener.” McCarthy exists because, for Sayre, there either is a lost moral compass or a belief in some kind of “moral half-way house” where “there can be such a thing as limited approval of evil.” This idea, of relative morality, is born of a confused time just after the devastation of World War II and Hitler taught the world, if nothing else, that morality cannot be relative or utilitarian. In his preparation outline, Sayre states that

Psychologically speaking, one might therefore say that Americans are now in the process of rushing from the extreme of self-confidence to the opposite extreme of deep anxiety, fearfulness, a feeling of helplessness, in the face of Fate. In such a climate as...above it is obvious how such a leader like McCarthy can come to immense influence. He does two things at the same time: he fans the fear, foments the hysteria, while at the same time posing as the knight in shining armor who will kill the dragon.

And yet, we know, from Darsey’s essay, that McCarthy never insisted on judgment, only on accusation and innuendo. Sayre lays claim to the fact that although Congress has “undoubted legal right to investigate anything,” no legislation emerged from twelve years of un-American activities investigation” (although he underlined in his notes the need to check on this fact). Without judgment there is no need for the accusation, thus, for Darsey, the phantasm. Sayre
states in his sermon that, “He who proposes to attain an end, however worthy, by unworthy means has in reality abandoned the end itself.”

Spoken from the Canterbury pulpit in Washington Cathedral, Sayre’s accusation that McCarthy’s rise is the direct result of the time as one of fear, anxiety, and helplessness means that McCarthy himself is also a victim of the time. But for that excuse, Sayre decries the lapse of the ability for the public to see or act on moral judgment.

Dean Sayre took much heat for his 1954 sermon. Even though the sermon was given from the New York St. John the Divine Cathedral rather than WNC, Sayre was associated with the WNC and not St John’s. By 1954, there is a six decade precedent of rhetoric that the Cathedral speaks as the national moral voice, lamenting the war dead but understanding the need to preserve the ideals associated with American freedoms. The question of security versus liberty, however, was played out in the hearings, not in war. The letters Sayre received revealed a seemingly large and vocal population that supported McCarthy’s efforts to weed out the communists. One letter began, “It was with much amazement that I heard of your violent attack upon Senator Joseph McCarthy when you exchanged pulpits with Dean James A. Pike of New York City. It is incredible to me that a man of God would attack so viciously and untruthfully a man who is fighting against the atheistic attack on God that is so rampant in the world today!”

Another angry person wrote,

The slimy hand of the Lehman-Rosenberg gang of contemptables (sic), whose perfidy knows no limit, is easily discernable (sic) in the prepared speeches of Sen.Flanders (sic) in his support of communism, who becomes no less contemptable (sic) as he pours forth

his venom, revealing (sic), by his foul mouth, his (sic) mental degeneracy, to (sic) the degree of loathsomeness... we find sprinkled through the press, radio (sic)... and, the few “Shallows” of the “Cloth” who disgrace “Holy Ground” as they stand in the pulpit and spew their venomous spleen on the few honest and coragious (sic) souls that fight vigorously and uncompromisingly, the (sic) vicious and brutal enemy of the christian (sic) church... the communists. These (sic) “Shallows”, who are guilty of “Holding the “coat”, wear the indelible stamp of the “HYPOCRITE” of the lowest order.134

Not to focus on the general illiteracy, or bad typing, of the writer, it is clear that there is a strong sentiment that those opposing the work of McCarthy to expose the “atheist communists” must be a supporter of “atheist communists.” This writer did not address his letter directly to Sayre, nor did the writer directly state that Sayre was a communist; but the claim was there nonetheless. Whether or not a like letter was written to Dean Pike at St. John’s is unknown, but for the time, this was dangerous ground Sayre was walking not only for his sake, but also because he carried the authority of the Cathedral with him.

Corresponding to the “Red Dean of Canterbury,”135 letters arrived at the Cathedral addressed to the “Red Dean” with no other address information. This irked Sayre,136 but he did

---

134 Letter to Sayre from S. H. Houston (of Texas and Chicago), rec’d 22 July 1954. Sayre Collection, WNC ChA: unclassified folder, McCarthyism.
135 The “Red Dean of Canterbury” was Hewlett Johnson (1874-1966). He was dean of Canterbury Cathedral from 1931-1963. Dean Johnson was a controversial priest who was communist and believed that the principles of communism corresponded with Jesus’ teachings. He was adored as a visionary or reviled at a Soviet puppet; there was little middle ground. Despised by the senior ranks of the Church of England, Hewlett Johnson was welcomed in high political places throughout the world. He had audiences with Stalin, Khrushchev, Molotov and Malenkov, Mao Tse-Tung and Chou En-Lai, Castro and Che Guevara. He also talked with Truman in the White House. He was tracked by MI5 for 35 years, was awarded the Soviet equivalent of the Nobel Peace Prize, twice spoke to huge audiences in Madison Square Garden, and was condemned by an Archbishop of Canterbury as blind, unreasonable and stupid. See Butler, J. (2011). The Red Dean of Canterbury: The Public and Private Faces of Hewlett Johnson. London: Scala Publishers, Ltd.
not back off from his outspokenness on McCarthy. Nor did other Washington clergy that agreed with Sayre, although they were not as outspoken, or if outspoken, did not have the same gravitas with the media to be quoted. Together, however, through the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America, they created a manifesto, of sorts, that responded to the devolved liberties of the time. Believing that religious freedom relies on a strong support of the Constitution that separates church and state, the document affirmed that

God led our forefathers to establish in this land a government dedicated to the fulfillment of liberty for all; [and] that the danger of subversion from within is best countered by the steady exercise of that same faith and freedom which by Divine Providence has always withstood the assaults of timid or narrow doctrine; [and that] some of our fellow citizens, through fear, seem prompted to measure other men’s freedom by their own standardized pattern of freedom, and incline to assess other men’s patriotism by their own concept of American freedom; [and that] whenever men neglect God they tend to rely instead upon some human agency which ultimately inclines to police the human soul.  

There is no indication revealing how many clergy chose to sign the document or that it was ever published or publicized. The document held some importance to Sayre, and he may even have been its author for there were several versions of the document in his papers and he wrote that

---

136 In a personal letter to Rev. Byron-Curtiss of New York, dtd 28 October 1953, Sayre wrote, “I did receive more than a thousand letters but by no means all of them addressed to “The Red Dean” and, as a matter of fact, about 70% of them were in favor of my stand. When I was speaking before the ADA I said that I was mildly irked at the Post Office Department, but I said it by way of teasing rather than in complaint.” Sayre Collection, WNC ChA: unclassified folder.

he intended to sign the document. Either way, there were both negative and affirmative letters for his outpouring of criticism for McCarthy’s methods. Sayre was not interested in McCarthy’s psychology, as he pointed out in his outline; Sayre was interested in the impact of McCarthy’s methods of accusations on the psychology of the nation stretching the role of the Cathedral beyond the care of the nation’s soul and moral character. He used WNC’s pulpit to bring this to the public table regardless of the danger to himself and the Cathedral.

Thus Sayre begins a marked change in Cathedral rhetoric taking its broad mission as a house for prayer for all people to a specific mission declared by adding the voices of protest and dissent, and especially to right the wrongs wherever they are found. This outward direction of rhetoric is not new, of course, but the social activism not directed toward heavenly salvation was definitely new. Sayre’s article in a 1978 Cathedral Age claims “that the Cathedral was an instrument in some sense beyond the confines of the church as an institution—an instrument that could be effective (in the nation’s capital) in the political center—in the arena of politics and public discussion and welfare” (Tooley, 2008). Thus, Sayre effectively uses the Cathedral as a tool rather than a place and in doing so the Cathedral is personified in action through him.

Sayre did not work just one social agenda at a time, however.

6.2 Instance 2: Civil Rights and the March on Selma

In an unidentified newspaper article, taken from 1953, the Very Rev. Sayre urged for desegregation and greater freedoms for the Negro population. The response letters are dated between October 26, 1953 and October 30, 1953, and are in response to a sermon given on Sunday, October 25, 1953. In the sermon, Sayre is quoted as saying, “As a citizen, I can have my

138 “End of Racial Curbs urged by Dean Sayre as Christian Duty.” Sayre Collection, WNC ChA: unclassified folder.
private opinions about segregated public schools and unequal employment opportunities and all manner of trifling social restrictions forgotten by all except the victims. But as a minister, there remains to me the more profound duty of declaring the principles that flow from our Christian faith.” He went on to say that he also took issue to the “gradualist” method of improving relations because “it is not the clock that saves. Time never softens pride but only hardens it; we are never redeemed by any calendar.” As a minister of the nation’s most dominant and politically powerful cathedral, visible to the nation’s leaders, and believing in the fundamental principles of Christianity, Sayre took seriously his role and the moral responsibility that is built in to holding the keys to the nation’s moral center.

The sermon comes just before the anticipated Supreme Court decision of Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka. The case had already been argued once in December 1952 and was about to be reargued in December 1953. Therefore, Sayre took to the pulpit and offered a sermon and told the congregation there gathered that they were not living up to God’s standard of loving their neighbors as themselves. For the Negro, Sayre explained, “It is obvious that their status would not be the keen and controversial issue that it is if we all, Christians and citizens, practiced the love we preach,” and that “there would be no question about their position, undifferentiated from our own.” Getting rather brazen, a characteristic that becomes Sayre’s signature, he sermonized that

Our concern is rather that if the Supreme Court orders the schools here in the District to be integrated, the whole educational standards are likely to fall because of the influx of poorly trained pupils from overcrowded schools. And then we shall likely feel obliged

---

139 Sayre, F. B. “God and race.” Sermon preached October 25, 1953. Sayre Collection, WNC ChA: unclassified folder.
to move out of the District to provide a better scholastic level for our children else-
where, or send them to segregated private schools. And what an expensive headache
all that will involve!...The Church can no longer afford not to speak in His name, no mat-
ter what obloquy or willful misunderstanding or vicious rumor may result.

And then the letters began. One letter, signed by J. Dean, exhorted,

Once before the writer has had occasion to warn and admonish you that, as a church-
man, you had better keep that old proboscis of yours out of political and social matters.
Now there is nothing in scripture that says that the people of this nation have to accept
the negro on a social equality for to do so is going to eventually result in the integration
of the white and negro race and this very easily could result in either one, or both, be-
coming a mongrel race to the utter destruction of this nation...If you feel that the church
is interfering with your political ideals and efforts, in God’s name resign from the minis-
try and let others who are not so impressed with the worth of the negro race to this
country take your place and you enter the political arena, where you can have full
course and be glorified in the work you love...the Jews are striving for a homeland in Is-
rael and why not bend you (sic) efforts and time to find a homeland for all the niggers in
this country for they are not only a sore and a pain in the neck but a very potential dan-
ger to the future welfare and proper growth of this country. Liberia is big enough and
fruitful enough for them all and the sooner you and others start sending them back the
more pleasant it will be for all concerned.

The letter was not unique, although this writer apparently was no stranger to letter-writing to
Sayre. J. Dean’s occupation is unknown, but I sincerely hope this person is not a minister of any
religious faith. Yet, of the thousands of letters Sayre received, he saved some and this is one he saved. Perhaps its vulgar tone gave justification to Sayre to use the weapon of the nation’s pulpit to make clear that Christian America must change its stance toward the Negro, especially of the South. The demand that Sayre leave the ministry to join the politicians connotes the long-held notion that the church was reserved for private salvation, not public salvation.

The letter-writer brings up, however, two common arguments of the time. First, integrating the races would inevitably lead to racial miscegenation. Fear of mongrelization was only part of the worry; the creation of a new minority accepted by neither white nor black figured large (Thomas, 1941). Mixed racial marriage was illegal and progeny of those mixed-race relationships were often denied citizenship (Bond, 1931). The sentiments of discrimination sound harsh, but J. Dean brought to light, albeit bluntly, an aspect of civil and legal life that eventually needed to be addressed (although it seems Sayre chose to ignore it as far as the public pulpit was concerned). Not all letters demanded strict segregation, however. Some letters advocated for the gradualist approach, an approach that Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King later addressed from the Birmingham jail as equally painful and unjust as segregation. Washington Cathedral has always welcomed people of all races and religions, believing as it has done so that it is a house of prayer for all people. But welcoming “different kinds” of people to a temporary moment of shared prayer is not the same making a permanent and regular place.

The situation Sayre’s outspokenness created placed the Cathedral schools in a predicament. Ironically, it was not until 1952 that the school trustees, after long and heated debate, decided to open the Cathedral schools to all students (who, of course, still had to afford the tuition). The trustees chose a gradual integration program, against Sayre’s preference, beginning
in kindergarten, meaning that the entire school would not be fully integrated until twelve years had elapsed (in 1964). The Rev. John Burgess, Chaplain at the Episcopal Student Center at Howard University, wrote that Sayre “seems to be one of the few certain sounds coming from local pulpits. What a travesty on the Gospel would occur,” he concludes, “if governmental agencies, secular schools and commercial establishments should beat the Church of God in the recognition of human rights!” This sentiment speaks of Sayre’s sense of urgency in race relations and integration. He cannot force the issue any further at the Cathedral schools, but he did demand the trustees grapple with the problem. Sayre definitely seems to understand the usefulness of the Cathedral pulpit to make the case for national desegregation despite the sometimes hateful responses he knew he would receive. In a way, he acted as a sacrificial offering, testing the waters of public opinion for other clergy across the nation. It is a role he decided was worth the price.

Responding to the actions in Little Rock on the eve of school integration in 1957, the Very Rev. Sayre called for an immediate appointment of a Presidential Commission on Civil Rights. The actions in Little Rock were indicative, he claimed of a “spiritual laziness” infecting the country, using the same refrain from his argument against McCarthy, and the lack of a programmatic or systematic means of oversight that was a matter of “moral timidity” on the part of Eisenhower’s Administration” (Sayre F. B., 1957). Pointedly, Sayre asks, “It’s all very well to say “pray” in such a situation, but how can God answer our prayer unless we are willing really

---

140 Letter from Dean Sayre to Mrs. H. M. Dickens of Alexandria, Virginia, dtd 30 October 1953. Sayre Collection, WNC ChA: unclassified folder.
141 Letter from John Burgess to Dean Sayre, dtd 26 October 1953. Sayre Collection, WNC ChA: unclassified folder.
to come to grips with the difficulty even at some risk and danger to ourselves?142 That danger of which Sayre speaks is a danger that he himself is willing to assume and this is shown when in March 1965, Sayre chose to join Dr. King in a planned prayer and march for the 1965 Voting Act. This Act was the third in a series of civil rights acts between 1957 and 1965 answering to the growing unrest among the Negro population and the outspokenness of Rev. Dr. King and Malcolm X.

President Eisenhower was lackluster in his civil rights legislation attempts, but he did manage to pass through a weakened version of his original civil rights bill; a bill that was the first civil rights legislation since 1870 when the 15th Amendment gave Negro males the right to vote. Those turbulent years following the Civil War and the subsequent Reconstruction, however, saw that by the 1890s many states had begun to introduce laws that prevented many Negro males the ability to vote, such as literacy tests and “grandfather clauses” that excluded those whose ancestors had not voted in the 1860s (Milestone Documents, 1995). Additionally, in 1896, the Supreme Court ruled in *Plessy v. Ferguson* that the races could remain legally separated, assuming facilities were “equal”, and the later institution of “Jim Crow” laws in the South reinforced the sub-citizenship that Negroes had always endured. Despite the 1954 overturn of *Plessy*, conditions were slow to change. Eisenhower’s 1957 Act only offered the Negro the unobstructed choice to vote; but if the Negro were to find his or her way impeded, and he or she filed charges, the court was always (in the South) juried by whites.

President Kennedy tried to pass through civil rights legislation, but he was assassinated before his bill went through Congress. Meanwhile, Dr. King wrote his letter from the Birmingham-

---

ham Jail addressing the inadequacies of gradualism, and using the later horror of a Presidential assassination, President Johnson was left with the responsibility to push through the 1964 Civil Rights Act that prohibited segregation in public places and disallowed any segregationist company from receiving federal contracts or monies (The 1964 Voting Rights Act, 2013). But the South still had its problems.

Preaching from the Lutheran Church of the Reformation (Washington, D.C.) pulpit on May 18, 1964, on the tenth anniversary of Brown v. Board of Education, Sayre declares that for all the rhetoric of the auspicious and covenanted design of the nation, there are still those “sworn to uphold the Constitution [who] twist and turn like the snake ‘round Eden’s tree to evade the express command that we should love our neighbors as ourselves. Law, which might not be the author of love, can at least reflect it, protect it, guarantee its sacredness to all.” But, of course, he goes on to say that law cannot command us to love our neighbors. Sayre wonders why it should take so long for this covenanted people to live their own proclaimed doctrine, complaining that a full century after the emancipation of slaves, “the same pious phrases are still sounding in the Senate chamber. It seems hard to believe, hard to understand, why people should resist a law that only spells out our deepest ethic, our most fundamental compact with one another.” Sounding familiar even into the twenty-first century, Sayre laments

Ah yes indeed, to our shame every red-necked supremacist every respectable citizen of the status quo, is wont to take the name of Christ for his crusade of opposition...Little does it become us, therefore, to sit here in this sanctified refuge [the Cathedral], railing at the practical politicians unto whose hands we relinquished the decision [to pass civil
The rhetoric follows Satterlee’s intent for this Cathedral—that it should remain “untrammeled by political influence” so that it may “boldly rebuke vice and political corruption.” Not that Sayre limits blame—placing solely on the halls of Congress, for he is unafraid to place blame on a “spiritually lazy” citizenry as well. The active-minded Sayre, blurred the line of political activism in the name of religion not by telling his congregants how to act, but by telling government how it should act. Therefore, as the next year approaches, and the 1965 Civil Rights Act was facing Congress, in order to end the practices of literacy tests and poll taxes and to fully enforce the rights of all registered voting citizens, Sayre resolved to join Dr. King in his planned march from Selma to Montgomery, Alabama.

There were a series of marches from Selma to Montgomery beginning on January 2, 1965. On February 18, during a second march, a twenty-six year old church deacon was shot and killed trying to protect his mother from a policeman’s brutality. Responding to this event, another march was planned on March 7. King was in Atlanta at the time and was not a part of the violence that ensued when after being warned to stop and disperse, the marchers continued across the Edmund Pettus Bridge. State troopers attacked the crowd with clubs and tear gas. Televised nationally, the event quickly was pegged “Bloody Sunday.” SNCC leader John Lewis was quoted as saying, “I don’t see how President Johnson can send troops to Vietnam—I don’t see how he can send troops to the Congo—I don’t see how he can send troops to Africa and can’t send troops to Selma” (Reed, 1965). After seeing news coverage of the event, King

---

144 See Appendix D, paragraph 6: Satterlee’s fundraising sermon of 1901.
145 Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee
made a call for religious leaders across the nation to join marchers in Selma in a peaceful, non-violent march for freedom (Selma to Montgomery March (1965)). This is the march that Sayre joined.

On March 9, King led the march to the same Pettus Bridge and when faced with state troopers, told the crowd to stop, kneel and pray. They then turned backed and marched back into Selma. Some were angry about this turn of events. Sayre, however, on the following Sunday sermon explained that “when King met the wall of police, he turned back, and in (doing) this (he) acknowledged the precious importance of law for human society. He bowed to its authority. As long as Man is in this world, the tissue of life and the quality of freedom does depend upon legal structure. Civil Rights grow out of Civil Laws; the two go together inescapably.”  

Sayre did not go alone to this march; two church canons went with him, and they shared the pulpit with Sayre that day for what is called a “corporate sermon.” These sermons mostly described their thoughts, feelings, and observations of participating in what seemed to them a moment in history. The following Tuesday, on March 16, King applied for and submitted a detailed march plan to a federal judge keeping Governor Wallace and local law officials from harassing the marchers. On Wednesday, March 17, President Johnson submitted the voting rights act to Congress (Selma to Montgomery March (1965)).

Planned in advance, approximately seven hundred Washington area residents, including several churchmen, joined in this last Selma march (700 from this area to join Selma march,

---

The marchers did not march the entire five days from Selma; instead they traveled directly to Montgomery to link arms with marchers on the steps of the Alabama State Capital. The instructions for travelers were clear: a tremendous crowd was expected and so it was imperative that all stick together as a unit, the purpose was to be witnesses for the Negro right to vote and to make known to them that the people of Washington, D.C. are there to support the Negro effort to secure their constitutional rights, that marchers were, in a very real sense in “enemy territory” and to courteously refrain from all dialogue with white protesters, do not talk to the press, and they are individuals and are not representing any one organization.\footnote{Instructions for Chairmen of delegation, trip to Montgomery, Alabama, March 25, 1965. Sayre Collection, WNC ChA: unclassified folder.} Sayre was in charge.

The last comment, that they are acting as individuals and not representing any one organization is to protect both the protesters and the Cathedral. Although Sayre can be identified with and personify the Cathedral, he is unwilling to allow others the same role. If he misrepresents the Cathedral, he answers for his misrepresentation. If others misrepresent the Cathedral, there is a different price to pay for the Cathedral. This very aspect of the situation inevitably led to serious repercussions for the Cathedral. But there is no confusion on anyone’s part that Sayre represents the Cathedral.

Upon returning to D.C., the various clergy from Washington Cathedral wrote of their experiences for publication in *The Cathedral Age*. Canon Michael Hamilton felt the moment and gloried in his activism when he realized the final length of the march was to be from the Negro
section “where hundreds of people lined the sides of the dirt streets to wave and smile at us.”

But his greatest revelation, from the privileged white perspective, was that,

In the march were people full of happiness, courage, purposefulness, and love toward each other. They were already free people in that they were free from so many inhibitions that beset the white segregationists. The white segregationists, lining the streets and looking out the windows were just dead; their faces either expressionless or full of a narrow dislike. They wouldn’t respond; we couldn’t even get them to smile, and while one or two of them spat at us or shouted obscenities, the general impression was that they were lifeless. Thus, one comes to be more concerned for the dignity of the white segregationist in all his misery than for the Negro. The Negro integrationists were full of self-confidence as they went about their work as leaders; and there was an air of nobility about them which was refreshingly new in one’s contacts with them. I had always presumed that Negroes could only gain their self-respect if whites gave it to them. But this day I learned that it is God who gives self-respect.¹⁴⁹

The National Cathedral schools had at this time only been (technically) fully integrated for one year.

The naiveté of Canon Hamilton’s report stuck sorely with some Episcopal churchmen in Selma and Montgomery. The Rev. Frank Matthews of St. Paul’s Episcopal Church in Selma, took especial issue after several reports by Cathedral clergy were published in *The Cathedral Age.*

He admonished that

I feel I must make a strong protest to you and take issue with you for what I feels to be a blatant misrepresentation of the City of Selma and my fellow citizens. Persons reading your reports who have never been to Selma and know nothing of it other than what they have read by much biased reporting and the distorted image that has been painted of us in the past five months, could only deduce that Selma is a lawless, frontier-type community composed of ignorant, bigoted people who are ready to shoot down all outsiders who intrude themselves into our way of life.  

He also took issue with the stereotype that only Negroes lived on unpaved, dusty streets, implying that all the whites lived on paved streets in Selma. Matthews points out that in actuality, the city is quite integrated. He blasts the reports in The Cathedral Age as “grossly misrepresentative” and that an apology is due. Further he suggested the Canons retract their “unfounded and unwarranted castigation of Selma, and admit that perhaps your limited understanding of this community is woefully inadequate.” He sent the letter to the presiding bishop, the Most Rev. Hines, the bishop of Washington, the Rt. Rev. Creighton, Dean Sayre, various canons and clergy from the Cathedral, the president of National Cathedral Association, the editor of The Cathedral Age, Selma’s mayor, the editor of Selma Times-Journal, the warden of his church (for their records), and a Mr. Wilson Baker. He asked how many of them lived in close proximity to a Negro family as he himself, an Alabaman, did.

The letter had to be acknowledged and addressed in a public manner. He also wrote a personal handwritten letter to Dean Sayre making the point that “Men of integrity in the honored positions they hold should be more diligent in ascertaining the truth before they allow

---

such false impressions to be printed and distributed nationally.” Even though he sent a copy of the letter to the Cathedral Age editor, Matthews obviously holds Sayre responsible for the decision to publish the reports of the march. Backing up the Rev. Matthews’ admonition, Mrs. Isobel Grayson, N.C.A. Regional Chairman of the Diocese of Alabama, also wrote a blazing letter adding a powerful bit of information not revealed in Sayre’s or any WNC clerical reports. According to Grayson, the Bishop of Alabama, the Rt. Rev. C. Carpenter, made a national plea to Episcopal clergy not to come to Alabama to join in King’s march because he realized the tense and explosive situation that swirled in his diocese. In defiance of a bishop’s request, and assuming the greater moral voice, the Cathedral dean took it upon himself to disregard a bishop’s plea. She demands that her letter be published in The Cathedral Age as no voice from Selma was offered. The Alabama Bishop backed up her request.

Sayre responded that as the purpose of their visit to Selma and Montgomery was to “demonstrate personal involvement in the cause of social justice,” and that because each man must face God singularly, he must also act on his personal conscience regardless of the consequences. Choosing to ignore the ties that bind him to the Cathedral, Sayre defended his actions by staking the claim made on the march itinerary—that the marchers acted as individuals and not as representatives. Defying his own publically announced philosophy that the dean wields great moral power through the use of the Cathedral, he lays blame for the misunderstanding on
the Bishop of Alabama. However, in the end, a shortened version of Matthew’s very long letter and the entirety of Grayson’s letter were published in the next *Cathedral Age*.\(^\text{154}\)

It should be clear that Sayre felt strongly about the role of the Cathedral in social causes. He barreled through headstrong and sure in the purpose of the Cathedral, especially concerning national purposes. Sayre criticized freely, feeling his heritage allowed him that freedom and responsibility. The Episcopal Church saw its membership decline continuously over the course of his tenure at Washington Cathedral (Tooley, 2008), although there is adequate evidence that membership to all mainstream religions decreased during the 1960s (Johnson, Hoge, & Luidens, 1993). These two examples of Sayre’s activism are merely two of many issues he felt inclined to grapple for he saw all as God’s work and the Cathedral as God’s arm. Sayre tasked other social issues such as the John Birch Society, racists, U.S. alliances with foreign dictators, what he called “the stupendous carnival of prosperity and easy living which is the life of the American people today” (Massie, 1963), and many other social issues of the time. For Sayre, the Cathedral is not just for praying; it is for engaging the discipline of morality in the national sphere. Sayre argued without pause that all religious clergy ought to be involved in social issues because only in that way can the Church be relevant to a modern people. Reinforcing Sayre’s judgment of the times and the role of Washington Cathedral, the incoming Presiding Bishop, John Hines claimed that the church (in general) had as its duty to “right the social wrong.” He further supports Sayre by stating that, “In our era, the road to holiness necessarily passes through the world of action.”

This activist stance both reveals the mood of the times and the idea of Washington Cathedral being the leader in Christian activism.

\(^{154}\) Personal letter from Dean Sayre to Mrs. Grayson, dtd 9 July 1954. Sayre Collection, WNC ChA: unclassified folder.

With Sayre as Dean of the Cathedral, one might think that he would use his pedigree to bring the White House closer to the Cathedral. However, Sayre was very critical of many political policies and especially of President Lyndon B. Johnson. Yet, his criticism is what seems to reveal the very usefulness of the Cathedral for a national spiritual sense. Although Sayre recognized the power of the Cathedral’s voice to correct social and political wrongs, he is equally insistent that the Cathedral’s mission that has stood in place for the last six to eight decades is not past tense, but necessary and genuine. Two strongly held political causes that Sayre used the Cathedral as support for speaks of the rhetoric of modern spirituality in an age of pessimism and disenchantedment. These two issues, his Vietnam protest and his support for native Arabs in Palestine, brought forth much publicity to the Cathedral and notoriety to Sayre. These actions also brought a close to Sayre’s tenure as dean and taught his descendent deans to be far more quiet and respectful of the Cathedral’s narrative.

After thirteen years of involvement in Vietnam, the year of 1972 opened with much promise. President Nixon spent a historic eight days in China opening the doors of relations and breaking bread with Chairman Mao. But, after the North Vietnamese military crossed the demilitarized zone in March, accelerating warfare in South Vietnam, Nixon ended the year with the “Operation Linebacker II” bombing of North Vietnam just before Christmas. Meant to bring the Vietcong to the negotiations table, from December 18 to December 29—excluding Christmas Day—more than 20,000 tons of bombs were dropped, mostly on Hanoi, killing well over a thousand Vietnamese (Kesby, 2012). The Paris Peace Accords were signed by the end of January 1973 paving the way for the end of the war.
Responding to the bombing after the first day, Dean Sayre and the Rt. Rev. John Walker, Suffragan Bishop of Washington, called for “A Walk of Conscience,” a prayer and march from the Cathedral to the White House on Saturday, December 30, 1972. The point was to call for the end of the bombing raid. The day before the planned march, President Nixon called an end to the bombing, but the march went on as planned since it was a continuance of anti-war rhetoric from Sayre on Vietnam. History tells us that the end of the bombing was the result of diplomatic talks between Secretary of State Henry Kissinger and North Vietnam and not at all a matter of Sayre’s call to conscience, but Sayre pushed the march to the White House gates anyway in a show of moral indignation for the act of bombing, ended or not. Nixon chose not to respond to Sayre directly. People, however, did.

Sayre’s chosen title of “A Walk of Conscience” pays homage to his friend’s, Martin Luther King, 1967 sermon, “Beyond Vietnam: A time to break silence.” In this sermon, King goes on public record of calling American involvement in Vietnam “a madness,” and that it was time “we admit we have been wrong from the beginning of our adventure in Vietnam” (King, 1967). King must speak out, he says, because his conscience leaves him no other choice and because there comes a time “when silence is betrayal” to his ministerial calling and to his own salvation. Further he announces that it is time that the religious leaders of the nation choose to “move beyond the prophesying of smooth patriotism to the high grounds of a firm dissent based upon the mandates of conscience.” Taking up that call to conscience, Sayre quickly organized a formal protest against the hyper-aggressive bombing at that time of year when the Christian soul is hyper-sensitive and anxious for peace.
Just before Nixon ordered the bombings to begin, he and Kissinger left D.C. and headed for Florida having said nothing at all about the order and leaving the impression that negotiations were going well (More bombs than ever, 1973). *Time* magazine called Vietnam “the President’s War” because no matter how much the public or Congress felt about the war, there seemed nothing anyone could do. The same article then claimed that Nixon got off lightly for all the destruction and that apathy reigned in Washington. Congress may have been in recession for the holidays, but WNC was on duty. *Time* did not report Sayre’s protest. In fact, the *Washington Post* only published a picture, with no accompanying article reporting what Sayre said when the protesters got to the White House. Part of the problem, of course, is that Nixon had already called off the bombing the day before.

The *Greensboro Daily News* wrote an editorial stating that Sayre had much to learn from Billy Graham, who chose to pray from inside the White House rather than outside (Insiders and outsiders, 1973). Retired Lt. Gen. Harvey Alness wrote that Sayre’s “baying with a mob was hardly fitting for a man of your position,” adding a post-note to “refresh yourself with a small parish.” Another wrote that he was disappointed that Sayre merely stood outside, “pussy-footing to Nixon” while praying instead of “giving him hell.” Additionally, WGMS Radio in Washington, D.C. wrote to sever ties with the dean because it was “in keeping with our policy not to present controversial political figures or messages...[and] many of our listeners would take exception to his being given free air time.” This last subtraction of clerical privilege, of course, makes plain that this protest march, after twenty years at the helm, baldly named Sayre a political figure rather than a religious figure. Certainly B. M. Stream, an Episcopalian, wrote that the march “had nothing to do with religion” and, in fact, declared that “Hanoi loved it”
since it showed a lack of support and respect for the American leader who was working so hard to end communist rule in Vietnam. Finally, in a strongly worded letter to the editor of The Evening Star and News, one writer opined that “Dean Sayre should be the first to be aware that religion demands that we reject cowardly, self-saving denial of responsibility by choosing the easy way out.”

There is a hint of derision that all Sayre could muster for the occasion was a stroll through town just to pray on different doorsteps, at a door where no one was home.

Lt. Gen. Alness wrote more than once to Dean Sayre, beginning in 1964 when Sayre chose to blast the presidential candidates as “sterile” and “impoverished” and again in 1968 when he claimed the “campaign has a hang-dog air, as the candidates move in one direction, and the people another.” Alness reminds Sayre that those “diatribes” garnered an admitted 10,000 letters. Sayre’s mail over time ought to have let him know that the people do not always see his actions as holy, or even as Christian. Protests against the war may have been rampant at university campuses, but there was still a large population that supported the goal of defeating communism and of saving the people of Vietnam from its clutches. One might also remember that only five months previous, Jane Fonda had engaged in her own Vietnam protest, garnering an almost permanent stain upon her character.

The awareness of being nationally televised is a matter of shame for Alness, but Sayre seems determined to use media to the advantage of the Cathedral. He felt strongly that Washington Cathedral, in order to be a national cathedral, and because it was destined to be the national cathedral, had to have a national voice and presence. In a 1964 interview with Samuel Belk, National Security Council Staff, Sayre reminisced about a conversation he had with (then)

---

155 Personal letters to Sayre. Sayre Collection, Sayre Collection, WNC ChA: j. 104, b. 4, f. 16.
Senator John Kennedy regarding his faith. Kennedy was confused because when he declared he would always put the interests of the country before God, he was criticized by both the Catholic and Protestant press. The men, Kennedy and Sayre, wondered, “In what sense does God precede country?” Of course, for Kennedy, being generally unversed in theology, had the luxury of simply being generally religious and generally accepting of many religions. Sayre, on the other hand, felt strongly that his calling was to help the human condition, the world over, using the power afforded by his collar and in being dean of Washington Cathedral, making God always precedent to the state, rather than equal, as Freeman stated, or subordinate as others may wish.

There were letters of support for Sayre, but it is the diatribe that speaks so loudly and makes clear that close to twenty years after the debacle of McCarthy, the anti-communist sentiments and worries about supporting the communists by not supporting the government still swirled with considerable force. The moral questions for Sayre, who should have known better according to his letter writers, had not all been considered. War may be hell, but as Mr. Koenig pointedly asked Sayre, “If South Vietnam were captured and Hanoi conducts its elimination of the great numbers of “undesirables,” what will Dean Sayre’s conscience tell him then?” He further asks, “How can a man of conscience say a war is “futile and meaningless” when it has kept a country form (sic) enslavement and saved many of its people from liquidation?” Mr. Koenig asks his questions in a letter to the editor in The Evening Star and News, making the questions public and worthy of public response. Although Sayre did not respond directly to Mr. Koenig in another letter to the editor, he does respond in sermon form using the same theological arguments that he always has: Our tendency is to assume that we have the answer and that we can
right the wrongs when the truth is that we cannot fix anything without understanding that “when He is left out—as secular modernity is all too want to do—the goal is left ephemeral and the path becomes invisible...The reason is that if one looks no further than the affairs of man, you almost surely run into a variety of insuperable dilemmas.”

Religion, in general, and the Cathedral, specifically as a national bastion of public and private morality, are both required; they are essential in acting on behalf of the higher order of humanity that George Washington spoke of and that Abraham Lincoln knelt down to. The dilemma is not whether to kill the bugs that eat our food or respect earth by growing our food naturally, a question put before him in Koenig’s letter. For Sayre, justice is not ever served by killing the bugs even if the bugs eat all the food.

6.4 Instance 4: The Palestinian Refugees in the Holy Land

Already noted in Chapter 5.4, Sayre was heavily involved in the ministry of refugees. As part of being appointed as Chairman of the United States Committee for Refugees, Sayre left for the Middle East in January 1960 in order to study the problem of Arab refugees displaced from Palestine when Israel was created. In his report to President Kennedy upon his return and in his interview with Belk, Sayre admits that the Israel/Arab problem was “an apparently insoluble problem.” But insolubility did not mean killing the attempt for solution. Sayre also told Kennedy that “it was the moral duty of the United States, a nation which has equal concern for both peoples [the Jews and Arabs], not just to sit neutrally between them, assisting both with

---

even hand, but to find some solution.” But the succession of Presidents after Kennedy proved that this attitude was not passed on.

The Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) was formally formed in 1964 with the mission statement that included a mission to destroy the state of Israel by armed struggle and replace it with an independent Palestinian state (The Palestinian National Charter, 2008). In June 1967, Israel launched what turned out to be a six-day war against Egypt, Syria, Jordan, and Iraq; this led to the Khartoum Resolution that stated the three “nos”: no peace with Israel, no recognition of Israel, and no negotiations with Israel. In 1969, Yasser Arafat was named chairman of the PLO. A continuous back and forth series of battles and acts of violence against each other begins.

Sayre had his hand in so many causes and it is truly difficult to say that any cause is more important to him than any other. But the longevity of his involvement with war refugees, and in this Jewish-Arab issue specifically, and his willingness to use the power represented by his authority at WNC, indicates that Sayre considered the Holy Land of high importance. Not only are the Palestinians important to Sayre, but he also held high regard for the Jewish plight to find a homeland. There were two sets of refugees wanting to claim the same land and adding to Sayre’s eventual downfall, he sided with the Arabs.

Sayre first became involved with the Jewish refugees in Egypt in 1956. He joined in the signing of an open letter to President Eisenhower regarding the government’s “deep concern” toward the Egyptian government in their campaign to expel the Jews.\(^\text{158}\) Likening the acts to Hitler’s during World War II, the letter condemns Egypt’s action. When Hitler first began his

campaign against the Jews, the world was slow to respond and the clergy at St. John the Divine in New York wanted to join with other prominent clergy, such as Reinhold Niebuhr, to demand that the United States “must assume moral leadership” against those who would deny human freedom. This was before Sayre’s time, but as covered in 5.2, Sayre became aware of refugee conditions in Jordan and Lebanon in 1957 while volunteering for the Inter-governmental Committee for European Migration. Then later, as covered in 5.4, he worked for the World Refugee Year, speaking out for all refugees.

Sayre also, by virtue of his work at the Cathedral, enjoyed a close relationship with the Jewish community, a community that remained friendly with the Cathedral since World War II when the Jewish congregation (the WHC) held Sabbath services at WNC while their synagogue was being built. But Sayre’s sympathy did not lie exclusively with his Jewish brethren. As far ago as 1958, Sayre was supporting the Arab refugees in Palestine that were formed when Israel was created in 1948.

By 1972, Sayre had engaged in several controversial activist stances and, after initial criticism, had survived to continue leading the Cathedral to completion. The power of his position gave him a voice in the nation’s leading newspapers, he was interviewed on television and radio, and he knew important and prominent pastors, philosophers, and world leaders. With considerable internal fighting over funding and building, the Gloria in Excelsis Tower was completed and dedicated and there was a last fretful push to complete the nave for the nation’s bicentennial. But the world’s refugees and human rights was the most persistent social, political, and moral issue that he worked for.
In 1972, Washington Cathedral held a “Plea for Justice for People of the Holy Land,” a service meant to “advance the cause of mercy and justice for all the people in the Middle East.” In a letter to Sayre, Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum, National Director of Interreligious Affairs, wrote of concerns that even though there were many in the Jewish community supporting, or at least concerned about, the growing Palestinian plight for self-determination, he was worried that the plea service would become a tool for “partisan and extremist anti-Israel positions and activities.” The use of the term “Holy Land” generally connotes support for Jewish existence in Israel. Yet the addresses given for the “Plea” on January 27, 1971 were not in support of the Jews.

Delivered, not by Sayre this time, but by Dr. John Davis and Christopher Matthews, the first address began with the statement that the creation of Israel has been catastrophic to the Arabs of Palestine and despite resolutions passed in the United Nations calling for repatriation and compensation, there has been no enforcement, even after a staggering affirmation of the resolution twenty-three times. He therefore declares “categorically that the Palestinian Arabs have been and are victims of grave injustice.” He blames this injustice on the Jews of Israel for “Israel is a Jewish state and in keeping with this role she has to give preference to Jews over non-Jews, even those born native to the land she now governs.” Adding to Richardson’s voice at the lectern was Christopher Matthew, M.P. of Great Britain, who stated that “Zionism is essentially a racist doctrine, and its racism is based on myth—on the widespread and firmly-held belief that the Jews are ethically related to each other and to the Jewish community which was dispersed from Palestine two thousand years ago.”

---

159 Personal letter from Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum to Sayre, dtd. 25 January 1971. WNC ChA: j. 104, b. 1, f. 4.
Jewish sense of insecurity that led to the present state of affairs. Although not said by Sayre himself, Sayre gave these two gentlemen license to politically proselytize who then essentially contradicted popular support of the Jews in Israel and blamed them for being bullies of the kind of which they have always been victim.

Since Israel’s founding in 1948, U.S. diplomatic relations with Israel have been mutually diplomatically friendly and economically cooperative (Zanotti, 2012). Until 1990, the PLO was considered a terrorist organization. After the January 1971 service for peace in the Holy Land, Sayre agreed to another service, more openly sponsored by the American Near East Refugee Aid (ANERA), an organization created in 1968 to minister to the Arab-Palestinian refugees from the 1967 Arab-Israeli War.

Sayre’s interest in refugees goes back to the 1950s, so this ought not to have come as a surprise; but apparently there existed a refugee non grata. Sayre began dialogue with John P. Richardson, Executive Vice-President of ANERA, in November 1971. Sayre allowed for the “effective use of the Washington Cathedral—in the context of a worship service—in order to dramatize the problems facing the Palestinians under occupation.” ¹⁶¹ This is not a neutral statement, but a position taken—that the Palestinians are living under occupied conditions at the hands of the Jewish Israelis.

An unhappy population sent in, by the thousands, enough mail to let Sayre know that this was not a generally accepted point of view, and definitely not from the Canterbury Pulpit. The same kind of letters arrived—stay out of politics, stick to religion—and many church members across the nation felt moved to leave the Episcopal Church altogether, further denigrating

¹⁶¹ Letter to The Record from John Richardson, dtd. 27 December 1971. WNC ChA: j. 104, b. 1, f. 4.
the denominational pull of the sensible and agreeable faith Satterlee had so much faith in as the best example of Christianity. The love-hate feelings Americans have historically held for Jews played out in a rash of often crudely written letters. Sayre was no stranger to receiving all kinds of letters, and his files indicate he read and responded to as many as he could; he kept a good portion representing all kinds of views for and against his statements. Sayre chose not to respond to the heated and hateful mail he received, much which suggested that he leave his position at the Cathedral. His chosen form of response was the sermon. He did not leave immediately, but his focus quickly turned to completing the nave in time for the upcoming 1976 bicentennial. In an unrelated matter, but in the spirit of his ministry, Sayre stated that “If and when I find another opportunity to strike another blow without at the same time upsetting the delicate balance of many factors here [at the Cathedral], you may be sure that I shall do so.” (Tooley, 2008). The rhetorical pugilist was lashing out almost defiantly against those who would take such vehement issue with his understanding of the Palestinian refugee.

Sayre had to answer to his bishop, of course, but Sayre’s lifelong ministry made him unafraid to use the Cathedral in order to serve a higher call that included more than bible lessons; he took the Social Gospel to new heights and fearlessly took the nation’s leaders to task in their Congressional and White House callings—also following in Satterlee’s footsteps. Sayre simply did it most relentlessly and with less finesse, assuming that the implied power WNC represented would support his understanding of the gospel responsibility. Rabbi Tanenbaum’s concern that the “Plea for Justice” service would become a “one-sided polemic” rather than “a religious service that will advance the cause of mercy and justice for all the people in the Middle East” was justified.
Later that same year, on Palm Sunday, Sayre took to his pulpit denouncing Jewish bullying against the Palestinians saying “What a mirror, then, is modern Israel of that total flaw in the human breast that forever leaps to the acclaim of God only to turn the next instant to the suborning of his will for us.” *The Washington Post* printed a stern editorial and added a full page of irate letters (Letters to the Editor, 1972). Rabbi Rabinowitz, president of the Washington Board of Rabbis, responded from Israel describing the Holy Land cities of Jerusalem, Jericho, Nablus during the Holy Week between Palm Sunday and Easter Sunday, occurring alongside Passover. There were no hostile acts and the only Arabs being deported were those who were suspected of being in terrorist groups, naturally implying that Sayre was wrong in his assessment of Jews in Israel. As CNN was not yet around, and as the network affiliates supported the government’s take that considered the PLO as terrorists, there was no dissenting or alternative voice offering a different interpretation of the situation in Israel or of how many deportations of suspected terrorists were made.

The backlash of his sermon and the “Plea for Justice” service was tremendous for Sayre. He admits that even though he did not retire for another six years, he knew that this time, he would pay a real price for his outspokenness. Spoken from the heart and soul, to be sure, but what is noticed in all the angry letters is that Sayre was taken to task as being unfit to either wear his collar or to represent the nation’s cathedral. To many, he had abused the power of the place and that he misunderstood how that power was to be used. There is no denying that Sayre left an enduring mark on WNC. Although the following years were less hostile, the idea that WNC had a moral obligation to not only speak out but act out has not disappeared. What
has disappeared is a clergy who assumes the ethos of the Cathedral is the same as the ethos of the people who run it.
7.1 The Last Stone

“When we need to grieve...when we want to understand...when we want to celebrate...when we want to express our concern—we come here. Eighty three years ago on this spot, President Teddy Roosevelt said: “God speed the work begun this noon.” And today I say: God speed the work completed this noon and the new work yet to begin.”

~President George H.W. Bush

Between 1977 and 1989, the Cathedral said goodbye to two Cathedral deans, Sayre, who retired in 1977, and the Cathedral’s first African-American bishop and dean, John T. Walker. Sayre’s vision, building the ‘Gloria in Excelsis’ tower as the means to ensure financial backing for the rest of the building, won out; but at great cost. In fact, when the Rt. Rev. Walker first became bishop in 1977, the Cathedral was close to bankruptcy, being almost eleven million dollars in debt, forcing him to stop all construction and curtailing many ministries. WNC’s religious and financial legacies did not slow Walker down, a fact that ensured Walker an early death at age 64, exactly one year before the final stone was put in place, mirroring Satterlee who died at age 65, only five months after laying the foundation stone.

Walker’s tenure as both bishop and dean of the Cathedral gave him the opportunity to narrow the Cathedral focus closer to home. Whereas Sayre brought WNC into the larger world, Walker maintained the activism but chose to work more closely with the needs of Washington,
D.C. area citizens by promoting more volunteer work through the laity in caring for the destitute and the abandoned (Shostak, 2013). That narrowing focus, however, also included the near obsession to complete the structure and making it once again solvent. WNC was busy during Walker’s bishopric conducting funerals (General Omar Bradley), prayer services (Vietnam Vigil and Memorial Services), inaugural prayer services (Reagan’s 2nd Inauguration and H. W. Bush’s), allowing activist voices (hosting Desmund Tutu), protesting at the South African embassy, supporting humanitarian efforts in Africa and in the poorer sections of Washington, D.C., dialoguing ecumenically (hosting the Ambassadors of Hope, and the Year of Reconciliation), and welcoming HRH Charles and HRH Diana while on their American tour—to name only a few examples. Every time WNC engaged in “national purposes” it added to the logarithm that defines “national purposes.” As that definition reformed, as staying out of politics, and while the Cathedral neared completion, donations poured in. On August 31, 1989, the Cathedral was completely out of debt, essentially completely built, and the finishing touches fully funded.\textsuperscript{163}

But, at the beginning of the completion year, on September 30, 1989, as the last grand finial stone to the top of the Phillips Pinnacle on the northwest corner of the St. Peter tower\textsuperscript{164} was being lowered into place, Dean Walker died from complications of heart surgery. Although sad that he missed the dedication of the longest-running construction ever in Washington, D.C.,

\textsuperscript{164} There are two towers at the west end of the Cathedral—the tower of St. Peter on the northwest side, and tower of St. Paul on the southwest side. The west side of the Cathedral is the entrance to the nave, or the long hallway where the congregation sits. Many would call this entrance the front of the building.
The Cathedral Age reports that Bishop Walker\textsuperscript{165} died at almost the exact moment that the grand rose finial was being set in place.

The poetics of Walker’s death aside, during his tenure at WNC, he continued Sayre’s activism, but chose to devote his activism to the problem of racism and sexism both at home and in South Africa. He gave voice against apartheid in South Africa, becoming friends with and welcoming Desmund Tutu at WNC, and by supporting the ordination of women and gays. He felt strongly about making non-whites feel comfortable in what many see as a predominantly white church. With a strong narrative of activism by Sayre and a quieter one by Walker extending over almost forty years, the Cathedral stood at the ready one year later on September 29, 1990, as the very last stone was raised and hammered into place, to commence being Washington National Cathedral. Whereas before WNC was referred to as Washington Cathedral, the completion acted as a sort of graduation into a new “grown-up” version of itself, thus the more complete name.

Cathedral Canon Richard T. Feller\textsuperscript{166} announced on radio while atop St. Paul’s tower, “With God’s help and guidance, and the help of a thousand cathedral friends…the fabric of this Cathedral Church of Saint Peter and Saint Paul is completed!”\textsuperscript{167} The carillon bells rang, bands played, and an estimated 20,000 people sang, hugged, and wept. Thirty minutes later, President Bush spoke, reminiscing that a mere eighty-three years to the day earlier, the cornerstone

\textsuperscript{165} The Rt. Rev. John T. Walker was the second Bishop of Washington to simultaneously be named dean of WNC, the first being the Rt. Rev. Alfred Harding who held the posts from 1909-1923. For further information on Rev. Walker, see http://biography.jrank.org/pages/2541/Walker-John-T.html.

\textsuperscript{166} In 1982, Feller was given the title of Canon, bestowed upon him by Bishop Walker for his three decades of dedication to WNC. Feller is the first lay person (non-clerical) on the cathedral staff to be given the title. Feller worked for a total of 37 years as Clerk of the Works at the Cathedral.

for the Cathedral was laid. The great temple is built. He declared, invoking both God and George Washington, that,

Here we have built our church—not just a church, a house of prayer for a nation built on the rock of religious faith, a nation we celebrate as ‘one nation under God,’ in a nation whose founding President, George Washington, said: ‘No people can be bound to acknowledge and adore the indivisible hand which conducts the affairs of men more than the people of the United States’ (Bush, 1990).

Spoken on an otherwise religious occasion rather than a political one, an argument can be made that Bush’s address reflected genuine faith rather than civil religion or civic piety; he did dedicate the speech to Bishop Walker. Determining which is not important for this project, but there is always the recognition that any time the President speaks, there are political implications.

The year, for President Bush, must have demonstrated the hand of God affirming the United States and the American people. Momentous events occurred this year that seemed evidentiary of this, especially the collapse of communist control in February foretelling the imminent dissolution of the USSR. Important to Cathedral life and Bishop Walker, if not to Bush, Nelson Mandela was released from prison in South Africa, beginning immediate negotiations to end apartheid rule. Looking forward to ending the Cold War, Bush certainly wanted God on his side as he began planning the ouster of Saddam Hussein and Iraq out of Kuwait after Hussein’s invasion that summer. Bush’s secret desires aside, the Cathedral paid no attention to the impending war. For this occasion, the impending war was simply not mentioned.
President Bush shared in his speech that he and his family were not strangers to WNC. Residing in Washington for the last ten years, the Bush family were neighbors with WNC while living at the home for Vice Presidents at Number One Observatory Circle, less than one mile from WNC. He states that their children attended St. Alban’s school (however, public record shows only their middle child, Neil, as attending and graduating from St. Alban’s). He further connects with WNC by adding to his CV that he was a board member at National Cathedral School. Additionally, one of their grandchildren was baptized at WNC and Mrs. Bush once read the annual “The Christmas Story.” His genealogical account of association with WNC seems to be his way of justifying his presence at the podium, as if being President weren’t enough, and making sure that the audience knows and understands his sincerity in his remarks on this occasion. President George H.W. Bush was not just President of the United States giving a commemorative speech; he was a member, participator, and contributor in the Cathedral’s life.

The praises Bush sings for WNC as a work of art and beauty and as an abiding place of spirit and peace made evident his love and admiration for the place. First he calls the Cathedral “an act of worship,” built by people whose faith carried the project through to its completion. This is confirmed in interviews with various stone carvers, one of whom said, “You work and you pray, work and pray. And always there is the feeling—all these things you do because...it is a church. It’s for God. It’s for Christ” (Reynolds, 1990). While the world turned and people fought, the Cathedral went about its work, chiseling away toward its finish. President bush praised those who kept working past mountains of debt and doubt that a grand cathedral ought to even to be built. He also praised the generations of workers, carried by prayer and devotion to an ideal, oversaw the construction of “this symbol of our nation’s spiritual life.”
Second, Bush confesses that he wants his grandchildren to come here and feel “the presence of God.” He called the Cathedral’s congregation the millions across America, giving praise to those millions who “caught the exhilaration of the dream,” naming Elsie Brown, Taylor Eiker, and Ruth Oliphant, as those who lived the entirety of the eighty-three year building project. WNC captured the attention of many, and all through its genesis, Bush commends the Cathedral its place as America’s moral compass—the symbol that serves as America’s “constant reminder of our moral obligations.”

Enough can never be said about WNC’s role as the nation’s temple because there are always people who have never heard of WNC or understood exactly what or where it is, and so the litany of “national purposes” must be made. Bush reminds the audience that his inaugural prayer service was held there, and later in the speech, adds the mirror story of Teddy Roosevelt participating and speaking at the 1907 lying of the foundation stone. He remembers that the great seal of the United States is embedded into the floor; he remembers the Lincoln and Washington bays holding prominent positions inside; he remembers that President Wilson, General Dewey, and Helen Keller are buried there; and he remembers that other emblems of American life, culture and history reside in carvings, sculptures, stained-glass windows, and embroidered kneel cushions. Like other entities part of the Cathedral, such as the Space Window, whether biblical or secular, there is a constant reminder that it all leads back to the spiritual roots creating the United States. It is as if Bush must make sure he is part of the Cathedral’s enduring narrative through the act of remembering how it functions as a national cathedral.
A cathedral, any cathedral, tells the story of a people’s cultural, social, political, economic, and religious symbols, theology (value system), and knowledge. In a very earthy and human sense, they are inherently places of power, reflecting the power that builds them. More than anything, however, they are meant to reflect the place of human power in a relationship to a greater power (Calkins, 1995). The English Gothic cathedral was originally theologically grounded in the philosophy of scholasticism, a complex integration of divinity and philosophy that seeks to “find order and meaning in the biblical stories and to relate them to natural events” (Stollard, 1993, p. 21). This means that from the very beginning, with the beginning of Westminster Abbey, as the first English Gothic cathedral, dedicated by Edward the Confessor in 1066 A.D., the theological philosophy of the Gothic cathedral is to incorporate biblical stories into the fabric of everyday life using sculpture and stained-glass windows.

In an intriguing article, “Re-collection for Refining the Study of Collective Memory and its Places,” Arden, Han, Norander, Pfal, Pollack, and Young suggest that the space window at WNC can be used to show how texts, contexts, and individuals collectively form re-membrances and re-collections of social construction (Aden, et al., 2009). Unfortunately, Arden and company completely miss the purpose of cathedrals as text. They may very well be museums of collective fragments of history, but those fragments should not ever be understood as representing the whole and if we use one part in order to explain how we understand our collective memories, we miss the point of the entirety of the Cathedral itself. The Cathedral cannot be defined by its parts even as those parts represent the moment of time the part was created, the people involved in the creation, and the goal of the part. In Gothic cathedral history, cathedrals naturally reflect, not represent, the ever-changing political, social, and economic forces
in place during its formation; but equally important are the diversity of those forces as well as their complexity (Calkins, 1995). Bush’s litany of remembrances are profound because there are many, it is a litany. Altogether, even if any person listening has never been inside the Cathedral and may even just then be learning about its existence, his remembrances enable formation of a sort of shared familiarity, and hopefully of curiosity, not of those specific remembrances, but of the Cathedral as a place we all ought to know and value.

When President Bush reminisces about the Cathedral, he emphasizes its purpose and place in the national narrative as the place to go “when we grieve...when we want to understand...when we want to celebrate...[and] when we want to express our concern[s]” (Bush, 1990). This “national treasure,” Bush concludes, is “America’s resource, refuge, and reminder” and “a house of prayer for all people. All people. All America.” Finally, on the day the last finial is put into place, on that symbolic day exactly eighty-three years after the foundation stone was put into its place, WNC is officially declared America’s place for “national purposes.” Bush then added to Theodore Roosevelt’s blessing of “Godspeed the work begun today” by blessing “the new work yet to begin.” A cathedral, although built, is never finished; it is not a final product, but a place of continuous production.

The Consecration Ceremony held the following morning had a simple focus: the Presiding Bishop marked the building with traditional Chi Rho (XP, superimposed) symbolizing being claimed for Christ. This is important for the Cathedral because consecration marks the building as “Christ’s own forever;” in the eyes of the church WNC will never become merely a historical landmark, a museum of sorts, a hall for music concerts, or a meeting space; although it will serve as the setting for all these things, WNC will never be defined by those things. The Cathed-
dral, with the act of consecration, is recognized as an *axis mundi* that allows heavenly communication—“the quintessential experience of the Cathedral [is] that something greater than oneself is at work here.”\textsuperscript{168} Whatever work is done in the Cathedral’s name is forevermore done also in Christ’s name for the Cathedral is devoted to the message of the Christian faith. Of course, its history has shown itself to be an assumed Christian entity, but the twenty-first century will show that this is a much more difficult position to maintain. In 1990, the auspicious occasion of the Cathedral’s completion allows for the rhetorical claim of WNC being the right hand of the Christian message in the United States, speaking as a house of prayer for all people, and reflecting the nation’s history and people. This is supported in the media, especially *The Washington Post*.

The 1990 Commemorative Issue of *The Cathedral Age* begins with a short article by *Washington Post* contributor, Marjorie Hyer. She writes that when she began her tenure at the *Post* in 1972, she wanted to cover how religion was responding to the concerns of the time—civil rights, the Vietnam War, governmental corruption, apartheid in Africa, the plight of the world’s poor, and Harlem’s slums. She felt there was no use to covering “piling stone on stone for the gratification of an elite few.”\textsuperscript{169} Over time, Hyer admitted that the Cathedral held high standards in all it does, including scholarship, and was “splendid in its ‘Westminster Abbey’ mode; but most importantly, she learned that what the Cathedral did best of all was meet the spiritual needs of the nation when tragedy struck—from interfaith prayer services such as when the U.S. Embassy in Tehran in 1979 was breached by Iranian mobs and during the subsequent


hostage crisis, as well as for the “murders of black children in Atlanta, the assassination of Egyptian President Anwar Sadat, the 1982 slaughter of hundreds of Palestinian refugees in camps in Lebanon, the shocking and unexpected death of Pope John I little more than a month after his elevation.” Likewise the Cathedral offered program seminars on bioethics, Northern Ireland, South Africa, the Middle East, and ministry to persons with AIDS. Further, the Cathedral has shown itself to be willing to step in controversy such as the role of women in the church, sexism, and feminism. Finally, Hyer commends Bishop Walker for his insistence that the Cathedral truly be a house of prayer for all people by inviting Roman Catholic prelates and clergy from many denominations to speak from the Cathedral pulpit, and to gather alongside Jewish rabbis, Muslim imams, and Buddhist priests in order to form the Interfaith Conference, a confederation of religious leaders to speak as a moral and ethical voice on community problems. In other words, the Cathedral “was and is deeply involved in the critical issues of our time.” In fact, she writes that the only other institution she wrote more articles on or about than WNC was the Vatican.

Naturally, the commemorative issue of The Cathedral Age also included a section on the first Cathedral dedication in 1907 when Theodore Roosevelt spoke. The article, meant to bring new members up to date and to remind older members of the Cathedral’s genesis, began with Roosevelt’s blessing of “Godspeed the work begun this noon,” but the second paragraph went straight back to 1791 when George Washington commissioned L’Enfant to design the new Federal City, including the church meant for “national purposes.” This was followed by the Congressional Charter in 1893, signed by President Benjamin Harrison. The article condensed the history of WNC down to fourteen short paragraphs.
There is so much residing within the Cathedral that the covering of the place quickly becomes overwhelming. Although the Cathedral is “built,” it is not “finished.” It cannot be finished because, of course, our national history is not finished. As part of Washington, D.C. and as a “national” cathedral, WNC has assigned itself a role that compares to other great cathedrals—to be the place that records the history of a people in their relationship with God. The National Mall is the repository of our secular history, but WNC chooses to be the repository of our religious history, and because of our religious roots, that history is not only relevant, it is inseparable from our secular roots, which is why there is a mix of secular and religious history residing in WNC. At the same time, WNC stands completely separate from the trappings of the secular state. WNC is not interested in recording every secular aspect of history, such as creating bays or tributes to all U.S. Presidents. Yes, there are the Washington and Lincoln Bays and the state seals that greet visitors inside the Cathedral; but before anyone sees those symbols, they pass through the theological outside. Overwhelming all secular symbols, the religious symbols residing throughout the Cathedral make clear that it is a religious home. No secular representations exist alone without an intertwined religious symbol.

Media coverage of WNC naturally focused on Saturday’s dedication and President Bush’s speech rather than Sunday’s consecration. Placement of the final finial stone was reason enough to celebrate considering the Cathedral had been in construction mode for over eighty years, never seeming to find an end, stopping and starting in fits and bursts, and always needing yet more money. The sigh of relief from everyone, especially the PECF who worked so terribly hard for over one hundred years to raise funds for building the Cathedral, was evident when the thousands of people cheered, hugged, kissed, and wept as Canon Feller declared the
stone set in place. In that vast audience below watching the proceedings were several people who remembered being present in 1907 when Satterlee placed the foundation stone. From that muddy field in 1907 to the grand Gothic structure in 1990, WNC grew to encompass the equivalent of two football fields, weighing three hundred million pounds, holding a seating capacity of four thousand people, two hundred stained glass windows, more than one hundred gargoyles and three hundred twenty carved angels. And so much more, of course. Yet, in an interview with *The Washington Post* for the occasion, a Cathedral worker shares that when she told a neighbor in Capitol Heights\(^\text{170}\) that she worked at the Cathedral, her neighbor remarked, “The cathedral? What cathedral?” (Stepp, 1990).

The occasion was not as important for media outlets as it was tremendous for the Cathedral. Newspaper reports were mostly limited to stating the fact that the building was complete and President Bush was to speak for the occasion. Perhaps more interesting than the news articles (that included the same information about the Cathedral springing from George Washington and being an ecumenical house of prayer) are the news headlines. For example, *The Washington Post* declared, “Cathedral is a monument to patience and purpose,” while the *Los Angeles Times* headlined, “Capital’s other hill tops out: After 83 years, Washington National Cathedral is ready for dedication. The Gothic church, an odd blend of patriotism and religion, enjoys a unique status.” Reflecting the two coasts, and their respective attitudes regarding the Cathedral, the two headlines reveal the differences in awareness and value for the Cathedral. Most interesting of all is the fact that *The New York Times* chose not to write about the completion at all perhaps because the Cathedral technically could have been completed as early as the

\(^{170}\) The distance between the two neighborhoods of Capitol Heights and the Cathedral is approximately twelve and a half miles with the Cathedral north of the Capitol Building and Capitol Heights south.
previous January. Cynically, The New York Times published an article nine months earlier, in January, stating that symbolism and symmetry meant more “in this city of monuments, memorials, diplomats and politicians” than actually finishing (Goldman, 1990). Initially focusing on the White House/Cathedral connection, the article lists American presidents purportedly or admittedly Episcopalian (which turns out to be 12 of 41, dating from 1790-1990, proportionally more than any other denomination): Washington, Madison, Monroe, Harrison, Tyler, Taylor, Pierce, Arthur, F. Roosevelt, Ford, Reagan, and Bush. It turns out that Reagan was never Episcopalian, but he did bring WNC into its maturity as a national spiritual home with his 1985 inaugural prayer service. The point the article means to make, of course, is the prevalence of Episcopalians in the presidency, implying that perhaps the associational power WNC enjoyed was related to its presidential religious appeal despite the fact that there were only three nominally Episcopalian Presidents during the twentieth century.

Washington National Cathedral is the only Gothic cathedral both begun and finished during the course of the twentieth century and quite possibly the last ever to be built due to a shortage and the eventual loss of expertise (Goldman, 1990). Completely missed by the media, the fanfare with which WNC celebrated its completion really was meant to proclaim a transition. Cathedral Canon Leonard Freeman prophetically underscores this as he states, “Our challenge is no longer how do you build a great cathedral, it’s how do you be one” (Stepp, 1990), leaving Cathedral clergy the difficult task of ensuring its mission as both “Washington Cathedral” and “National Cathedral” (Reynolds, 1990). Left up to the future, but now with eight decades of precedent, the mission of WNC continues to evolve incrementally.
7.2 The Assumption of WNC

The dream of L’Enfant, Rev. Nourse, and the Rt. Rev. Satterlee is fulfilled with the temple use of the Cathedral for the national mourning and burial services of the nation’s presidents. Beginning with Woodrow Wilson’s tomb placed prominently in the Cathedral, through the national prayer services for Presidents Kennedy, Eisenhower, and Johnson, to the funeral services for Presidents Reagan and Ford, the Cathedral has acted as the proper and natural place for memorializing, but not burying, the nation’s leaders. Not only are the deaths of presidents important for the Cathedral, but also the inaugurations of presidents seem more dignified and more beautifully blessed when the nation gathers at the Cathedral for prayer services.

Comparing WNC to Westminster Abbey is comparing tangerines and oranges. They are both cathedrals, one Episcopalian, the other Church of England. They are both architecturally English Gothic; one built in eighty three years, the other built in 732 years. They both hold remains of their country’s leaders; one holds one leader, the other holds seventeen. They both are the places of benediction for their country’s new leaders; one has served five leaders on their inaugural days, and the other has served thirty eight coronations between the years 1066 and 1958. They both hold the remains of and reminders of their country’s culture in the form of architectural wonders, in the burials and memorials for artists, poets, writers, and singers, scientists, economists, political figures, the military, and activists, and in the historical depictions throughout. Other than the obvious difference in age, the major difference between the two is in their internal government. WNC is born of and dependent upon the ideal of the separation of church and state. Westminster Abbey is a “royal peculiar,” meaning it belongs to the monarch who appoints its officiates. It is this distinction to which we now move.
With WNC’s completion and consecration, the Cathedral stood ready to fulfill its original mission, which is to be a house of prayer for all people, the spiritual home for the nation. Finally, the nation could claim its own religiously “sacred space to which the nation could turn in its moments of celebration and transition...holy ground for the country as it faced periods of crisis and struggled with the great moral, ethical, and spiritual issues of the times” (Washington National Cathedral, 2011, p. 8). As the nation’s spiritual home, WNC has sought to serve the nation in those moments that serve the nation’s soul, most often in the form of prayer services in times of crisis and inaugurations and for funeral services of those important to the nation. It is in this role of welcoming and biding adieu to our nation’s leaders that WNC has defined the very public image, and most defined aspect, of the Cathedral as “national.” Yet, it is important to understand that as a free church, not belonging to the government, it remains a choice and it can refuse to be used by political entities for political purposes when those purposes defy the Cathedral’s mission.

WNC, as revealed in Chapters 3 and 5, began participating in memorial services in 1898, with the dedication of the Peace Cross. Then even before President McKinley’s assassination in September 1901, Queen Victoria of Great Britain died January 21, 1901. For the Queen’s memorial service, Satterlee presided with the company of President McKinley and various Cabinet members at St. John’s Church (Brent C. H., 1916). In his address, Satterlee iterated what so many others around the globe were uttering regarding the Queen—that she was both woman and queen. Having no strong relation to her or the country, Satterlee really could say nothing else; but what is important is that from the beginning of his bishopric, even without his cathedral home, he laid the groundwork for memorial services as the role for which the cathedral
was meant. Satterlee began the Cathedral’s role of recognizing those leaders important to the heritage of the Church, and, for Satterlee, the Queen, as head of the Church of England, obviously ranked as important to the Cathedral. The service was cursory and obligatory, not even being mentioned in his *Private Record*.

On the other hand, Bishop Satterlee maintained a long-lasting and respectful relationship with President William McKinley. Bishop Brent, Satterlee’s biographer, noted that Satterlee’s admiration for McKinley sprang from the extensive pains McKinley took during his presidency to arrange meetings for the representatives of church societies and organizations (Brent C. H., 1916, p. 247). McKinley’s funeral was held in his hometown of Canton, Ohio, but a memorial service was also given from the pro-Cathedral at St. Mark’s. Satterlee’s tribute spoke of the importance of a strong personal faith (McKinley was Methodist) with an impassioned voice:

> What are all the poor laurels of mere worldly success beside the triumph of that death-bed scene? He, our revered leader and chief, died not only as a martyr for his country but as a Christian confessor, whose ruling passion, strong in death, outpoured itself in that stalwart cry of an undying faith: ‘Thy will be done. Nearer, my God, to Thee’ (Brent C. H., 1916, p. 247).

Whether or not McKinley said these words at his deathbed is not at issue here, but it is interesting that Satterlee implies he heard McKinley’s confession at his deathbed. If so, that close relationship between the Cathedral’s bishops, and later, deans, evidently arises from Satterlee’s precedent.

Benjamin Harrison died in March 1901, just short of six weeks after Queen Victoria, but there is no recording of a service by Satterlee to commemorate the man who signed the Cathe-
dral charter. The only other president for which there is no record of acknowledged service is for Grover Cleveland, who died in 1908, four months after Satterlee. Washington National Cathedral did not participate in the funerals of Theodore Roosevelt in 1919 or Herbert Hoover in 1964.

President Woodrow Wilson is the only president interred at WNC. His funeral service in 1924, however, was a private affair held at his home. Said of the choice to be interred at the barely begun Cathedral, the *Washington Post* wrote,

> The nation stood at salute yesterday while the body of Woodrow Wilson was conveyed to the Cathedral of SS. Peter and Paul, and there laid in the crypt of Bethlehem Chapel with appropriately simple ceremony... The choice of a burial place for the late President is approved on every hand. Future ages will adorn and hallow the pile that is rising on Mount St. Alban. Many of America’s great sons will find their graves in that sacred edifice. Wilson, the pioneer of world peacemaking, broken by effort and dying with hope unfulfilled, may be joined hereafter by another famous American whose efforts will be blessed with success (Three things that happened at Washington National Cathedral, 2012).

The appropriateness of what was then generally called Washington Cathedral for such state events seemed obvious, but the idea of burying a continuous stream of presidents has not been accepted by succeeding presidents.

To be America’s Westminster Abbey, however, WNC needed to establish itself as the place for state funerals and, if possible, burials. This has been a difficult role to establish if only because the nation’s presidents have only brief ties to Washington, whereas they have stronger
ties to their home states. President F. D. Roosevelt is recorded as finding Bishop Freeman’s suggestions of a Cathedral funeral and burial repulsive and tedious, calling Freeman “the body snatcher” (Ickes, 1954). Roosevelt’s funeral service was held in the East Room of the White House with Bishop Dun (not Freeman) officiating. The Cathedral held continuous prayers for three days following Roosevelt’s death.  

To date only one president calls WNC his last home—Woodrow Wilson who died in 1924. (Perhaps the idea for holding Roosevelt’s service in the White House came from Wilson’s service held privately at this home, with Bishop Freeman officiating.) A military funeral followed the private one, leading to the Way of Peace entrance at the South end (the only entrance completed at that time) and into the Bethlehem Chapel. Mrs. Edith Wilson, who died in 1961, is the only First Lady to hold her funeral at the Cathedral, and, of course, the only First Lady to be buried there. So far, other presidents do not seem inclined to follow suit.

After the memorial service for President McKinley, commemoration services were held for Warren G. Harding in 1923, William Howard Taft in 1939, Calvin Coolidge in 1933, John F. Kennedy in 1963, Harry Truman in 1973, and Richard Nixon in 1994. The Cathedral rang a muffled peal of bells for Lyndon Johnson during his funeral service at National City Christian Church in Washington, D.C.  

---

171 WNC website states that WNC held a memorial service for Eleanor Roosevelt in November 1962. Secretary of State Dean Rusk was the principal eulogist, and even though the front row of seats was reserved for the White House, they remained vacant.
172 All of these references are taken from the Cathedral’s website, [www.nationalcathedral.org](http://www.nationalcathedral.org).
The first state funeral held at WNC was Dwight Eisenhower’s in 1969. Before the funeral, he lay in repose in Bethlehem Chapel for two days. Eisenhower’s body was then moved to the Capitol Rotunda for one day, and then returned to WNC for his funeral on March 31, 1969. He is not, however, buried at the Cathedral; he is buried on the grounds of his presidential library in Kansas. The next state funerals held at a completed WNC did not occur until the twenty-first century.

Ronald Reagan died June 5, 2004 at his home in Los Angeles sixteen years after leaving public office. Gerald Ford died December 26, 2006 at his home in Rancho Mirage, California thirty years after leaving public office having achieved the distinction of being the longest lived president, beating Reagan by forty-five days. The Military District of Washington (MDW) makes the request to all departing presidents for their funeral wishes because all presidents are granted the privilege of a state funeral. The MDW works with each president to have plans set in place, making sure they reflect the president’s values and wishes. Until 2004 when Reagan died, WNC had only been the site for the state funeral for one president. Reagan, who chose to use WNC for his 1985 inaugural prayer service and various other prayer and memorial

A state funeral is the highest posthumous honor accorded in the United States offered only to the President, ex-President, president-elect, or other persons designated by the President. See http://www.history.army.mil/books/ Last_Salute/AppA.htm#AppA1965.

Gerald Ford died at the age of 93 years and 165 days. As of January 2013, Jimmy Carter is 88-years of age and George H. W. Bush is four months older than Carter. Bush will be 89 on 12 June 2013.

The Military District of Washington, or MDW, is the military unit whose responsibility is to receive the nation’s wounded and fallen soldiers and to conduct military funerals at Arlington National Cemetery. Former Presidents Carter, George H.W. Bush, and George W. Bush have funeral plans on file with the MDW. Bill Clinton does not. Although all presidents are granted the privilege of a State Funeral, not all have chosen to have one. For example, Richard Nixon chose not to have his funeral in Washington, instead opted for a simple ceremony at his presidential library, because he did not feel welcome there. A state funeral is a national tribute to an important personage of a country, most notably, its head of state. The United States conducts state funerals on behalf of all persons who hold, or have held, the office of president, to include a president-elect and other persons designated by the president. See http://mdwhome.mdw.army.mil/state-funerals/state-funeral-ceremonial-traditions for more details.
services, also chose WNC as the venue for his state funeral. The elaborate plans began in 1989 when he left office at the end of his second term (Bumiller & Becker, 2004).

Betty Koed, assistant Senate historian, explained that television has something to do with how Reagan’s funeral was planned. She said, “This gives an opportunity for the American people to participate in a way they couldn’t before” (Bumiller & Becker, 2004) and there is no doubt that the majestic beauty and prominence of the Cathedral was important to Reagan. The Reagans planned early for his funeral and frequently updated those plans over the years, especially after he was diagnosed with Alzheimer’s. President Reagan’s funeral plan was a 300-page document.

Ronald Reagan was baptized into the Disciples of Christ Church (DoC) in 1922, the faith of his mother (Lewis & Rollman, 2005, pp. 181-192). His two marriages were performed in DoC churches. Later, after retirement, the Reagans attended a large Presbyterian church in Bel Air and the senior pastor of that church, Michael Wenning, performed his interment rites at the Reagan Library on June 7 2004 at sunset. But Reagan’s very public and elaborate state-sponsored funeral service was held at WNC.

There is reason to understand Reagan’s plan to use WNC for his funeral is its regal character befitting the leader of the nation and its spiritual nature as a home welcoming Americans of all faiths. There is also another reason to consider WNC for state funerals—the Cathedral has an established working plan for security measures in a post-9/11 world. The impact of 9/11 on WNC is covered in Chapter 8, however, as the first state funeral in the twenty-first century, this is important to note. At the time of Reagan’s death, President Bush was presiding at the 30th G-8 Summit being held at Sea Island, GA. Leaders from Canada, France, Germany, Italy,
Japan, Russia, and the U.K. were all meeting on U.S. soil. This means that Homeland Security measures were already in heightened status. Daily al-Qaida threats poured in while American troops battled in Iraq and Afghanistan. With other leaders around the world now planning to enter the U.S. for Reagan’s funeral, with the summer vacationers and war protesters in full swing in the nation’s capital, and with the President having to travel into Washington, D.C. from Georgia, security was at an all-time high. Reagan’s funeral plans called for his casket to lie in state, fully accessible during the entire time, for a little over one day and then be moved to the Cathedral located five miles away through winding, narrow streets. The security logistics were mind-boggling.

Washington National Cathedral, now having been the recent place of G. W. Bush’s inaugural prayer service and the 9/11 national prayer service for three years, had already established a known and well-executed security relationship with the security powers in Washington, D.C. The most relieving part of the funeral service, security-wise, is the fact that only invited guests were to be allowed inside. Even so, the simple fact that the President of the United States, the Vice-President, the Secretary of State, members of Congress, and many other world leaders, including Mikhail Gorbachev, Margaret Thatcher, Prince Charles, Tony Blair, and Kofi Anan, would be in attendance, all in one place, added to security woes. Because of the list of dignitaries expected to attend, Homeland Security designated WNC for special protection from the Secret Service (Madden, 2004). Ronald Reagan surely did not consider this sort of contingency while planning his funeral, but the realities of the times and setting were daunting, and the Cathedral assumed its place with great dignity taking all the security measures in its stride.
Gerald Ford, on the other hand, was Episcopalian after his marriage to his wife, Betty (Elizabeth). While serving in Congress, the Ford’s attended an Episcopal church near their home in Alexandria, VA. While president, they frequented St. John’s on Lafayette Square. He was, however, no stranger at the Cathedral. He frequently went to Bethlehem Chapel accompanied by his friend and colleague, Albert Quie of Minnesota, after the last roll-call vote of the day (Shannon, 2006). He occasionally attended Sunday service at WNC and most excitingly, he escorted Queen Elizabeth II during her Bicentennial visit to help celebrate the opening of the Cathedral nave in 1976 (Washington’s church, 1976).  

Two and a half years after Reagan’s funeral, WNC was once again hosting a state funeral for a president. Ford’s death, the day after Christmas (also known as Boxing Day), presented the Cathedral staff the need for extraordinary effort. An elaborate service, the feast of Christmas, with its extra services, requires a full retinue of clergy, the full force of flower guild and altar guild members, extra security, and coordination with television crews as they record the Christmas Eve service. Less than forty-eight hours after the last Christmas service, Cathedral staff was charged with preparing a state funeral. Cathedral Dean, Samuel Lloyd, remembers, “From chair arrangers and floor polishers, to security guards and flower arrangers, to choristers and vergers, to our key leaders in every area—everyone pulled together” (Shannon, 2007). Additionally, WNC was in the middle of constructing a new parking garage underneath the front entrance of the Cathedral, making the area, in the dead of winter, a mess of sand, mud, and construction equipment (AP, 2006). But no one suggested a change of venue.

176 Dean Sayre said of the occasion, “On the Fourth of July America will celebrate her separation from Great Britain; then four days later, as there ought to be, there will be this celebration of our reconciliation” (Washington’s church, 1976).
The service, although pre-planned through the MDW, was painstakingly pulled together twelve days after Christmas, also the feast day of the Epiphany, and exactly one hundred fifteen years after the Cathedral charter was signed into existence by President Harrison. Ford’s service was styled very much like Reagan’s, but much less elaborate. The service for both funerals followed the *Book of Common Prayer* Burial of the Dead Rite I protocol. The Bishop of Washington, who, unlike Westminster Abbey, holds jurisdiction over WNC, greeted the Presidential casket at the Western Entrance, receiving the body in the name of Jesus Christ. Music and the choice of speakers for tributes are determined by the families, but the Episcopal Church only allows music from the church hymnal. The hymnal contains a number of patriotic songs, such as “America the Beautiful” and “The Star Spangled Banner,” but the accompaniment is mostly by the U.S. Marine Orchestra (who also accompanied the music in 1907 and at almost every national purpose since) and the Cathedral Choirs of Men, Boys, and Girls.177

Both men’s cortège moved through the Cathedral from the Western Entrance prefaced by Bishop John Chane’s tap of his shepherd’s crook. Silence filled the Cathedral broken by the occasional tap of the Bishop’s crosier as he processed with the casket through the nave toward the great cross where the nave, transepts, and apse all meet beneath the Gloria in Excelsis tower. The caskets were then placed on a catafalque in the company of the American and presidential flags and the Cathedral’s paschal candle, symbolizing the risen Christ. Peggy Noonan,

177The Cathedral Men and Boys Choir was established in 1909. The Cathedral Girls Choir was formed in 1997 after a bequest of one million dollars by heiress Isabelle Scott. Ms. Scott gave the gift for a girl’s choir for students attending the National Cathedral School, from which she had graduated in 1958. She also left a $3 million endowment for the choristers. The most amazing part of this was that, even though Ms. Scott sang in the Cathedral’s volunteer choir, the Cathedral Voices, she was deaf. She used powerful hearing aids and learned to read lips so well that even people close to her did not know she was deaf. Ms. Scott also was Jewish, the daughter of a founding partner of the Giant Food grocery chain. Ms. Scott was afforded a funeral at WNC when she died in 2011; afterward the family went to her home to observe the Jewish funeral rite of Shiva (Schudel, A local life: Isabell Scott, 70; heiress assumed many identites, endured hardship in a life of giving, 2011).
Reagan’s speech writer, described the sight and sound of the bishop’s tapping sounds as Reagan’s casket processed into the Cathedral saying, “Oh what a sound. It sounded like tradition. Majesty” (Noonan, 2004).

American state funerals, even those held at WNC, are fairly simple affairs (compared to, for example, state funerals in Great Britain). The church service is meant to bless and consecrate a baptized child of God and to send them on their way to the next journey of life, and every person is given the same blessing no matter their station in life. The greatest pomp offered any president is the full military honors accorded the commander-in-chief. What the Cathedral has to offer is a magnificent setting with the opportunity of either denominational neutrality or denominational ecumenism, on sacred ground. Unlike the inaugural prayer services, there are prescribed limitations to what is allowed during the service (Concerning funerals, n.d.). The only agenda available for funeral services in WNC is to confer the soul of the deceased into the hands of Jesus. It should be noted that the 2003 Book of Occasional Services does include a ceremonial funeral service for those who do not profess the Christian faith. That service is a very simple service that excludes the mass.

This last point is worthy of consideration. As WNC has worked diligently to be that national church envisioned by George Washington and Pierre L’Enfant, and as it is a consecrated Episcopal Cathedral, meaning it is the ecclesiastic seat for the Bishop of Washington (and, since 1941, also for the Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church as well), and as no religious test or faith is required for our national leaders, the Cathedral is necessarily constrained by its own laws. Additionally, although there is the service for the unbeliever, there is the sense, in the case of WNC, that use of the Cathedral for the state funeral of an atheist becomes a matter, not
of an Easter benediction, but strictly one of venue still tied to a Christian theme, and necessarily a strict aspect of civil religion. We have not come to this juncture yet in our national history, but it stands to reason that someday we will have a president who is an atheist, or non-Christian. The Cathedral is open to sharing its sacred space with other faith traditions, and this consideration includes the possibilities for liturgies offering other ways of encountering God, and to be less Episcopal and even less Christian (Washington National Cathedral, 2007, pp. 11-12). Calling this theology a “generous-spirited Christianity,” the Cathedral at some time will have to face its own ontological meaning when its use for an atheist President becomes a reality.

Alternatively, inaugural prayer services are the creation not of the church, but of the political office of the president. There is much more leeway to define what constitutes a prayer service for the nation’s leaders. Begun by Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1933, the National Patriotic Service, was a simple mass service dedicated to the inauguration of the President. This same service was held annually on the anniversary of Roosevelt’s installation during his first term of office and after that was held only on the inauguration day. Those first four were held in March, and due to passage of the 20th Amendment, was changed in his second term to January 20. The only non-church music in the service was the National Anthem. These Patriotic Services were not continued after Roosevelt.

All literature on inaugural prayer services make the claim that the tradition originates with President Washington. However, although Washington’s Congressional resolution stated that after taking the oath of office, the President and Congress ought to go to hear divine service before beginning the work of creating a new form of government (which did happen), the repetition of the act did not even survive into his second term of office. There is no record of any President hearing divine service after taking the oath of office until Roosevelt’s services beginning in 1933.
In an undated memo by the Very Rev. Sayre written for use in Australia, Dean Sayre links the birth of democracy and the American form of government to the hand of God. The very ideals that created the United States, for Sayre, were “Conceived [in] the stunning notion that the Providence of history could well be entrusted to the universal suffrage of plain people, and the secular leaders of their election.” For this reason, Sayre continues, “the inauguration of a new President of the United States is like the pause of a prayer, when 215 million citizens may catch a glimpse for a moment at least of the common and sacred root on which so great a tree is grafted.”

WNC is home to six inaugural prayer services celebrating the Providence of history beginning with Reagan’s 1985 prayer service at the beginning of his second term in office.

President Reagan began his second term by attending a prayer service at National Cathedral rather than National City Christian Church where he held his first inaugural prayer service in 1981 (Boorstein, 2009). So unremarkable was this prayer service, it was barely mentioned in The Washington Post (Hoffman, 1985) and only garnered a two page pictorial spread in The Cathedral Age. Noted was that this Sunday, January 20, 1985, was Washington’s coldest inauguration weekend, competing with Super Bowl XIX. The Rev. Billy Graham gave the sermon, while Rabbi Leonard Cahan, of Congregation Har Shalom, read from the Torah, and Archbishop James Hickey, of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Washington, read from the New Testament. This prayer service fit Herberg’s stereotype of the Protestant—Catholic—Jew make-up of the U.S. One photo of the President and Vice-President, with their wives, shows them to be holding a service booklet that looks to be no more than four to six pages long. The

---

179 Statement on the Inauguration of the American President for Use in Australia, by Francis B. Sayre, Jr., undated. WNC ChA: j. 104, b. 7, f. 3.
service must have been early since the inauguration ceremony had to make sure Reagan took the oath of office by noon. Cathedral staff does not seem to be aware of the potential of this moment, which is unusual. In the past, the bishops and deans of WNC have gone to great pains to place the Cathedral in its national role. This occasion apparently just passed by with little recognition.

Four years later, however, was another matter. President George H. W. Bush’s inauguration occurred on Friday, January 20, 1989, leaving Sunday the appropriate day, after a weekend of parties and balls, to have the inaugural prayer service (rather than before the inauguration as for Reagan). Expressing the long-held and oft repeated refrain of WNC’s role as that “great church for national purposes,” The Cathedral Age included the connection between White House and Cathedral was “paradoxically, a testament to the unity of a nation of people who are free to come together to pray and to the diversity of religious expression in America.” Although The Washington Post did not pick up the rhetoric, it did offer the messages of the three ministers who offered Godly advice to the President. Photos taken at the service show the smiling countenances of the President and Vice President, and their wives, obviously enjoying the occasion. The New York Times mentioned the prayer service stating that the President was welcomed as a “symbol of unity,” then the family returned to the White House and watched the Super Bowl (Weinraub, 1989). This was the only reference to the prayer service. Not as tuned in to the Cathedral’s desire to serve the nation as those in Washington who have watched its eight decade rise, the New York Times focused more on the political changes of the Reagan-Bush transition.

---

The day was dedicated by President Bush as a National Day of Prayer and Thanksgiving and a letter was sent to more than two hundred thousand congregations nationwide encouraging them to use portions of the cathedral service in their own worship services that day. The letter, published in *The Cathedral Age*, stated that Bush felt it “most fitting that the event of my Inauguration as President conclude in an ecumenical service of prayer and thanksgiving.” He confesses that worship is basic to their personal lives and it was appropriate that “The American Bicentennial Presidential Inaugural will end on a note of asking God’s guidance on the new beginning.” At the end of the service, as the bells of the Cathedral rang, other bells across the nation were invited to join in order to “express our gladness for the blessings the Lord has given.” The Bush’s, as members of WNC, had a strong relationship with the Cathedral, and this event, even more so than Reagan’s, marks the Cathedral’s participation in defining those “national purposes” to which it was born to serve, especially in the national participation of churches in the service.

Already noted in section 7.1, the road to completion at WNC began later that year in September. The maneuvering for its place in the nation had its preview at the Bush inaugural prayer service. Combined with the beginning of its completion year nine months later, WNC was anxious to take its place in the national narrative as being an integral aspect of the nation’s religious heritage and the rhetoric of the last ten years of the century consistently made this claim. Even so, despite a welcoming letter from Cathedral Dean Nathan Baxter to newly elected President Clinton setting up an assumed inaugural prayer service for January 19, 1993, the

---

182 As ‘Providence of history’ would have it, GEORGE Washington was inaugurated in 1789 and GEORGE H. W. Bush was inaugurated two hundred years later in 1989. President Bush had reason to make the connection of the inaugural prayer service as following the order of George Washington’s example.
Clintons ultimately decided to hold his inaugural prayer service at the Metropolitan American Methodist Episcopal Church in the morning before the inauguration. The Cathedral remained a house of prayer for various national causes during the Clinton years, but not as grandly in the spotlight. Not even President Nixon’s death in 1994 reached the Cathedral.

President George W. Bush continued in his father’s footsteps regarding the use of WNC for an inaugural prayer service the morning following inauguration day in January 2001. The services followed closely the same format, adding an invitation to, in his second term, a Muslim cleric who pulled out at the last moment, reportedly due to illness (Bush’s second term begins in prayer, 2005; 2005 Inauguration of President George W. Bush, 2005). A fixture at inaugural events, Billy Graham gave the invocation declaring that God’s hand determined Bush’s re-election. This comment, seemingly blasphemous, if not prideful, can be designated as aspect of civil religion in that it confirms the entrenched mythos of the United States as God-covenanted. It is not, we will see later in President Obama’s second inaugural prayer service, an unusual statement to make. The service, ecumenical and interfaith in a very limited sense, followed the Episcopal prayer book.

On the occasion of the Cathedral’s centennial in 2007, Cathedral representatives wrote a centennial statement defining what WNC “means” one hundred years after Satterlee lay the foundation stone. The statement, in the form of a booklet, recognized that WNC, an “ecclesiastical peculiar” performs a unique function that combines the roles of three great churches in England—Westminster Abbey, as the nation’s sacred shrine; St. Paul’s Cathedral, England’s ca-

---

183 Westminster Abbey is a “royal peculiar,” meaning that it is governed by the head of state, or monarch. An “ecclesiastic peculiar,” on the other hand, is governed by the diocesan bishop. For WNC, governance resides with the Bishop of Washington.
thedral residing in the nation’s capital; and Canterbury Cathedral, as the mother church for Anglicans and seat of the archbishop (Washington National Cathedral, 2007, p. 6). Creating this new type of cathedral that performs all three functions does not happen quickly, and WNC has experienced its growing pains, as was evidenced the slow evolution in inaugural prayer services, especially since they only occur once every four years. The statement, by the same token, meant that rhetoric claiming WNC as an “American Westminster Abbey” could effectively come to an end.

In the same 2007 centennial statement, WNC declared its calling to be “the voice of a generous-spirited Christianity.” The booklet spent several pages defining what that term means, but as a new concept, being a generous spirited Christianity is much more difficult than declaring so. Admitted in the statement was the question of what exactly is meant by a “generous-spirited Christianity,” and a response was offered simply that it is “the essence of the faith handed down through the centuries, understood, embraced, and lived out in the welcoming, compassionate, intellectually open way for which it was intended” (p.6). This essentially is a nice way of saying, “we don’t really know yet.”

Two years later, President Barack Obama chose to be more inclusive in his 2009 inaugural prayer service on January 21. Although Barack Obama is not Episcopalian, his decision to hold the prayer service at the WNC is reportedly based on the familiarity the Secret Service of the church space and grounds (Mueller, 2008).

Unrelated to the familiarity aspect for Secret Service agents, Obama made a calculated decision to hold his prayer service at WNC, making very specific changes in his prayer service meant to bridge religious rifts created by the terrorist attacks by Muslim fundamentalists and
Bush rhetoric. In light of Obama’s inaugural speech, which mentioned the reality of American religious experience composed of a diversity of beliefs as well as non-believers, the 2009 prayer service was as inclusive as it could be with respect to religious representation (although, no atheists or other fringe religious groups were represented). The philosophical openness advocated by the WNC lent itself to this inclusiveness within the cathedral walls. With a fair share of controversy, Obama invited clergy of various faiths to participate in, not just attend, his service (Pulliam, 2009; Gilgoff, 2009; Montopoli, 2008). As a result, “rabbis in yarmulkes, Catholic bishops in magenta vestments, Protestant pastors in suits, and female Hindu and Muslim leaders in colorful garb—20 prominent religious leaders in all” joined the new president, his cabinet, administration, and Congress in the fifty-sixth presidential inaugural prayer service (Boorstein, 2009). It seems as though every effort was made to represent a panoply of religion in order to make a statement signifying the value of diversity.

The Washington Performing Arts Society and the Children of the Gospel Choir together sang four rousingly positive and hopeful songs, playing into Obama’s campaign slogan of hope and change. The Children of the Gospel Choir was formed in 1993 as a way to garner the talents of local youth in a way that offers self-confidence and respect for others (The Kennedy Center, n.d.). The choir is not connected directly to the cathedral (the cathedral has both boys and girls choirs), but the decision to showcase a choir made of inner-city youth, predominately African-American, is one way of indicating the change Obama represented.

The introit, the processional song, was a psalm taken from Isaiah 56:7. It is a prayer glorifying the sanctuary offered in a house of God. Speaking to WNC’s mission, the first and last lines of the psalm say, “My house shall be called a house of prayer for all people.”
The Book of Common Prayer, the authorized text of Episcopal service, states that “For special days of fasting or thanksgiving, appointed by civil or Church authority, and for other special occasions for which no service or prayer has been provided in this Book, the bishop may set forth such forms as are fitting to the occasion” (The Episcopal Church, 1979, p. 13). For the occasion of this prayer service, one that includes participants from outside the Christian faith, the bishop has deemed sensible to modify the service in such a way as to allow clergy from several faiths to play a part. This service included three introductory prayers—a welcome, an invocation, and an opening prayer. The opening prayers were followed by the National Anthem.

The versatility of the Episcopal service lends itself to the ability to incorporate patriotic language to substitute for political language. The Book of Common Prayer offers alternatives for any number of circumstances including blessings and prayers for non-religious occurrences. A section of prayers is devoted to those for national life and social order. The bishop is given leave to adjust the language to use a more contemporary vernacular, but the prayers still follow closely The Book’s rubric.

The true diversity enters into the service, not through the Book of Common Prayer (BCP), but via the use of an interfaith community pulled together in an effort to prove the nation is present in communion despite disparate differences. Dr. Cynthia Hale, of the Disciples of Christ in Decatur, Georgia, gave the first reading. A prayer for civil rulers followed, given by a non-denominational pastor from Alpharetta, Georgia, taken from the BCP (#19, p. 820). The program for the service noted that the prayer for civil rulers is drawn from George Washington’s Inaugural Prayer Service given April 30, 1789. Judging by the dates, Washington’s prayer was made part of the BCP later, in October 1789, when the Protestant Episcopal Church held its
Convention and ratified the American version of the book to distinguish it from the Anglican version.

Rabbi Saperstein, of the Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism in Washington, D. C., read psalm 121 in both Hebrew and English. His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios of America, Primate of the Greek Orthodox Church in America and Exarch of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, gave the Gospel reading. In a historical move, a woman gave the sermon, or Homily. Dr. Sharon Watkins, of the Disciples of Christ, preached of the responsibilities of leaders to use their faith in God to work toward justice (Watkins, 2009). She included in her sermon a Cherokee wisdom story, and quoted from Emma Lazarus’ poem dedicated to the Statue of Liberty, Dr. Martin Luther King, Kathryn Bates’ music of “Oh beautiful for spacious skies,” and poet James Weldon Johnson. The liberal secular references to reinforce a religious message, given as a sermon, further exemplifies how this service acted as a mélange of faith and non-faith, accepted and even embraced by those listening. At least there was no notice taken by the media (Kontorovich, 2010).

The Litany of Prayers is the longest and most diversified part of the service. One Islamic cleric, two rabbis, one Hindu priest, the president of Sojourners (a social/religious/political organization), a fundamentalist pastor, a Methodist pastor, and an Episcopal canon reverend offered prayers for the nation, the president, government leaders, and the nation’s judges. Taken directly from the BCP, the prayers were given in a way that allowed the congregation to actively participate in a responsorial manner. The response signifier was “Keep this nation under your care,” followed by the response “And guide us in the way of justice and truth.” This same repeated blending of nation and religion is manifest throughout each portion of the service.
The function of religion in this prayer service, as history and scholarship has shown, is to reinforce the recognition that the “American republic could flourish only as religion flourished” (Hutcheson, 1988, p. 19). National narrative as offered by George Washington and other of the nation’s founding fathers, and reinforced by Cathedral rhetoric over the course of one hundred years, shows that religion serves not only as a means to check impiety and immorality; it also serves as a means to sanctify and legitimize American ideals and, perhaps, existence.

The finale of the prayer service includes two patriotic hymns (as they appear in The Hymnal of 1982): *O Beautiful for spacious skies* (#719) and *For the healing of nations, God, we pray with one accord* (#718). One last prayer is sandwiched between these two songs and is given by Katharine Jefferts Schori, the first woman presiding Episcopal bishop and primate of the Episcopal Church. The prayer, the program informs, is drawn from Abraham Lincoln’s Second Inaugural Address given in 1865. The Most Reverend Schori prays that God will “Grant patience and perseverance to the people of this Nation. With malice toward none, with charity for all, may we strive to finish the work you have given us to do…” (Washington National Cathedral, 2009d, p. 16). She has mixed Lincoln’s words with contemporary post-communion Blessing (*BCP*, p. 366). Her final benediction is to “Give us strength to hold fast to what is good that we may go forth renewed and committed to make hope a reality.” In this last prayer, she mixes post-communion prayer with Obama’s political rhetoric of hope.

The music interchanges, the prayers, and the language of the order of service all indicate a manner of taking turns so that neither the religious nor the non-religious overpowers the other. The careful balance shows the delicate negotiation that went into creating a service that
envelops the sensitivities of all who might have been in attendance. The service steers clear of evangelic language or heavily patriotic tone.

From its inception, the Protestant Episcopal Church understood its place as an integral partner in the governance of the nation. Although it is true that many of the founding fathers of the nation in 1789 were of this faith, they were also popularly known as Deists and pluralists in their adamancy of disestablishment (Hutcheson, 1988). Over time, of course, the nation’s understanding of the relationship between church and state has been in constant flux (Medhurst M. J., 2005). The exciting “first” that Obama as the first African-American President represents also heralds in the first of the national recognition of not only many denominations of Christianity, but also the serious acknowledgement and respect of other faiths, and brings into national rhetoric the recognition of no faith at all by adding a strong secular aspect to a prayer service.

Obama is open in reconciling his own religious background. Explaining that his African father was a non-practicing Muslim and his mother agnostic, that he attended a Catholic school while living in Indonesia, and that his Christian conversion occurred while he was living in Chicago and active in volunteer work (Obama, 2006), and he is not apologetic for his upbringing or his belief system. His own background leaves him free to publicly embrace several religions as well as none. The decision to share the prayer service in WNC as the house of prayer for all people, with both Islamic and Hindu faiths may have been not only a way to begin healing a national distrust of Islam and a suspicion of Hindu polytheism, but also a chance for WNC to show how a national temple acts in the capacity of serving as a place for “national purposes” and within its newly written mission to be a “generous-spirited Christianity.”
Because of the national mistrust of Islam that has been (perhaps) carefully nurtured by the Bush administration to justify the war on terrorism, the addition of a Muslim representative stood the chance of backfiring. The program for the prayer service noticeably refers to Dr. Ingrid Mattson as President of the Islamic Society of North America (p. 12). First, the Muslim representative is a female, second she is referred to by her academic credentialing and third, she represents an association rather than a specific mosque. We might add that Dr. Mattson’s name is recognizably American, or European-American. Dr. Mattson’s potential controversiality thus has been effectively neutralized and balance in the service maintained. The overall balance of the service, however, was painfully contrived.

Four years later, the Cathedral once again hosted re-elected President Obama’s inaugural prayer service. On January 22, 2013, WNC offered an inaugural prayer service that served as a more mature example of being a “generous-spirited Christianity.” WNC was a house of prayer for all people; it was less English and more American; less Episcopal and more ecumenical; and less distinctively Christian and more interfaith (Washington National Cathedral, 2007, p. 11).

Once again, the Washington Performing Arts Society Children of the Gospel Choir sang just before Mr. and Mrs. Barack Obama and Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Biden entered the Cathedral (actually there was a fifteen minute time lapse of silence while the people waited for them to appear which is now clipped from online videos). Reduced to two songs instead of four, the choir, made of teenagers, performed with spiritual vulnerability, rather than optimism, while their Christian faith clearly showed in their faces, eyes, voices, and bodies. They filled the Cathedral with such a joyful noise that the fifteen minute span of silence following did not be-
come uncomfortable until just before the President and Vice President appeared. Once there, with everyone in place, the service began with the introit and hymn, followed by a remarkable welcome by the Bishop of Washington and Dean of the Cathedral. The Rt. Rev. Mariann Budde (Bishop) and the Very Rev. Gary Hall (Dean) spoke alternatively in English and Spanish a welcoming statement that ended with “this house is your house.”

On this occasion, WNC was a house of prayer for all people and obviously less concerned with the religious/secular balance. Not only was there a fair representation of faith, those faiths offered prayers from their faiths in their own manner, fixing one of the most disturbing aspects of the 2009 service. Thus, Cantor Mikhail Manevich from the Washington Hebrew Congregation offered the first invitation to prayer, Deuteronomy 6:4-9, in Hebrew. Dr. Abdullah Khoug, President and Iman from the Washington Islamic Center, offered the second invitation to prayer, Adhaan, the traditional Muslim call, in Arabic. Finally, WNC Cantor Allison Mondel offered the third invitation to prayer, Nunc gaudeant, in Latin.

The prayers themselves were not taken directly from The Book of Common Prayer. All the prayers addressed “God,” but did so in a more ecumenical and less distinctively Christian manner. For example, in the prayers for those who govern, God was referred to as “Faithful God,” “Lover of Souls,” and “O Lord,” without reference to Jesus, so that the final prayer offered by Iman Mohamed Magid, President of the Islamic Society of North America, was able to sincerely offer the prayer, beseeching, “O Lord,” to give our nation’s leaders “discernment and self-control” in their decisions and actions while governing the nation. Additionally, despite the previous controversy of participating in a Protestant and Christian house of prayer that several of the various faith traditions of Judaism, Islam, and Catholicism expressed in the previous ser-
vice in 2009, this gathering of interfaith and ecumenical representatives participated, if not with their faith’s blessings, then without censor.

The issue of homosexuality made it into the Cathedral walls, from the pulpit, no less. WNC announced on January 6, 2013 that it was receptive to celebrating same-sex weddings (Hall, 2013). President Obama had made a public statement on May 9, 2012 supporting same-sex marriage while in the midst of campaigning for his second term (Cales & Baker, 2012). In light of these two announcements, Atlanta preacher, Louie Giglio, felt pressured to resign from the invitation to offer the inaugural benediction just a few days shy of the inauguration in light of the revelation that he gave a sermon in the 1990s condemning gay relationships (Zoll, 2013).

The topic of homosexual marriage, in the past year, has been a contentious topic and one whose time is obviously at hand. WNC, therefore, following the 2012 General Convention announcement that it would create a blessing for same-sex couples, and after the November 2012 elections in the District of Columbia and Maryland voting to legalize same-sex marriages, Bishop Budde and Dean Hall decided to allow same-sex weddings at WNC. Carefully worded in his announcement, Rev. Hall said,

The Cathedral is called to serve as a gathering place for the nation in times of significance, but it is also rooted in its role as the most visible faith community within the Episcopal Church. For more than 30 years, the Episcopal Church has prayed and studied to discern the evidence of God’s blessing in the lives of same-sex couples. It is now only fitting that the National Cathedral follow suit. We enthusiastically affirm each person as a beloved child of God—and doing so means including the full participation of gays and lesbians in the life of this spiritual home for the nation (Hall, 2013).
Setting itself up to condemnation and rejection, the announcement potentially created a difficult decision for those clergy invited to participate in the inaugural prayer service who firmly stand against homosexual relationships and marriage. Instead, there was no public controversy at all; although, no doubt there must have been grave discernment on the part of those planning to participate in the inaugural prayer service. Instead, the faith communities came to offer prayers to the President in the spirit of the purpose of the service, including Nancy Wilson, moderator of the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches, a church with a predominantly gay denomination, who herself is in an openly lesbian long-term relationship (Ring, 2013).

The Rev. Adam Hamilton, who gave the sermon, admitted in an interview several days before the service that he understands and believes both sides of the argument. Raised in a fundamentalist home, Hamilton admitted that he would still argue the conservative side, if not for the people he has met (Burke D., 2013). In his sermon, Hamilton alluded to the character of Moses as being humble and compassionate for the marginalized and oppressed. The lesson of Moses was to underscore our presence on the Last Day at the Last Judgment when Jesus asks each of us, “How did you respond to the least of these?” The implication being that as long as there is an underclass of humankind in the United States, we have not lived up to our ideals. In his sermon, Hamilton observes that “We find ourselves desperately longing to find common ground. To find a common vision, to be one nation, indivisible with liberty and justice for everyone.” There is no way, for Hamilton, to see a truly unified nation without a unified vision that everyone can agree upon. Later Hamilton laments the division now residing in the country between our two political parties forcing a blurred vision for the nation. Vision is important, as
WNC can readily attest, and the effort to have a unified vision of how to bring the nation’s faith traditions together to speak with one voice was worth the (sometimes) painful lessons the Cathedral has endured. This spoke directly into the heart of Sayre’s twenty-seven year ministry as dean of WNC.

Overall, the 2013 inaugural prayer service rectified a serious problem in its own vision of being a “generously-spirited Christianity.” Depending less on a balance of church and state and relying more on finding unity in the nation’s voices of faith, of finding that common purpose, or vision, allowed WNC to fit more easily into its national role. No challenges to its spiritual authority were made. No lawsuits were filed. Media coverage was generous, and C-SPAN3 covered the entire service without comment.
CHAPTER 8: THE NATIONAL CATHEDRAL IN AN INTERNATIONAL AGE—THE ROLE OF 9/11

8.1 WNC and 9/11

“And it is a radical thing that Jesus says that we are family. We belong…but the truth of the matter is that when Jesus says we all belong, there is a radicalness that we have not yet fathomed. That we are members of one family. So Arafat and Sharon belong together. Yes, George Bush, Bin Laden, Saddam Hussein, God says, all, all are my children. It is shocking. It is radical.”

~The Most Rev. Desmond Tutu, September 11, 2002

Another day that will live in infamy is September 11, 2001. We woke to reports that planes struck the World Trade Center towers and the Pentagon, and, before it could seriously threaten the Capitol, a fourth plane was forced into a field in Shanksville, Pennsylvania by ordinary heroes on the plane. The nation quickly shut down as all commercial air traffic was grounded, Walt Disney World in Orlando closed, as did the Sears Tower in Chicago and all 3,700 Starbucks (Achenbach & Booth, 2001). Television stations stopped all commercials and ran coverage of the attacks non-stop, while several shopping network stations shut down completely. Major League Baseball games were indefinitely postponed. People asked, “Why?” The answer soon came back that the attacks were the handiwork of Osama Bin Laden, an extremist Muslim terrorist. Along with people lining up at hospitals to offer blood donations and anything else they could possibly think of to do, there were some who broke into irrationality by attacking any Muslim-looking person they saw. Around the nation, police cruisers were stationed outside area mosques to protect the places and people there from Americans suffering from rage and a desire for vengeance (Achenbach & Booth, 2001). Feelings fluctuated between indescribable sadness and frustrating anger.
As soon as pastors and religious across the nation could, they opened the doors to their various worship centers as people gathered en masse to pray. The nation and its people were in great need of solace and answers. In churches where no more than a few people came for any weekday service, now thousands showed up (Sanchez & Booth, 2001). How to deal with the urge for vengeance was the foremost concern for clergy; the question of “Why would God allow such horror to happen to innocent people?” is never easy; and in this case of such massive loss, the old and trite sayings simply were not going to be enough. Still, an answer was required. Horrified by the terrorist attacks, people sought out comfort in religious services on military bases, at universities, hospital chapels, churches and synagogues, and in public spaces, attempting to find in prayer some help for this one unanswered question (Murphy & Broadway, 2001). Pastors across the Washington, D.C. area, as well as across the nation, immediately began to realize that feelings of anger were competing with feelings of Helplessness. The Rev. Gary Hulme, administrative coordinator for the Center for Pastoral Counseling of Virginia, was quoted in The Washington Post saying that as people “start missing a loved one, they get angry [and] they’ll ask, ‘What do I do with my feelings if my Christian faith says forgive and turn the other check when I want to bomb whatever country did this?’” (Murphy & Broadway, 2001). But, as area clergy repeatedly pointed out in the enfolding days immediately after the attack, bombing the heck out of some country, of course, never brings back lost loved ones, and vengeance does not, in the end, bring justice.

Cathedral Dean Nathan Baxter received a personal call from President Bush asking the Cathedral to host an interfaith prayer service for the nation (Washington National Cathedral, 2001). The President announced a National Day of Mourning and Remembrance for Friday,
September 14 when the nation’s churches, synagogues, and mosques would all join in a day of prayer. In the immediate aftermath of the attacks, some churches, like the Cathedral, began holding several prayer services a day, and Bush’s call for a National Day of Mourning and Remembrance gave a united day, and for many, a united moment, for prayer (Washington area churches, 2001). People across the Washington, D.C. area woke to a soggy, rainy Friday and went out to pay homage to the lives lost, wearing flag ties, flag shirts, flag bandannas, and flag hats (Sanchez & Broadway, 'A kinship of grief,' 2001).

Responding to the President’s request, WNC immediately began working with a team from the White House to produce an interfaith and ecumenical service that would be televised nationally. WNC quickly gathered Christian, Jewish, and Muslim clergy for this nationally televised service, with Billy Graham giving the sermon and opera singer Denyce Graves singing “America the Beautiful.” The U.S. Army Orchestra and the U.S. Navy Sea Chanters joined the Cathedral choirs in providing the music that filled the Cathedral. The interfaith service included the voices of Dr. Muzammil Siddiqi, Imam of the Islamic Society of North American, Rabbi Joshua Haberman, Rabbi Emeritus of Washington Hebrew Congregation, and the Rev. Kirbyjon Caldwell, pastor of Windsor Village United Methodist Church in Houston, Texas. The Gospel Reading from Matthew 5:2-12a was read by His Eminence, Theodore Cardinal McCarrick, the Archbishop of Washington.

The Rev. Dr. Billy Graham’s sermon acknowledged that at some point, justice will happen, but for this moment, people needed to gather simply to confess a need of God. Graham underscored his message was not a new message, but since the very purpose of the Cathedral Age that published excerpts from Graham’s 2001, Tutu’s 2002, and The Dalai Lama’s 2003, September 11 sermons.
cathedral is to be not only a house of prayer, but also proof of God’s dominion in all human relationships, he vows that “difficult as it may be for us to see right now—this event can give a message of hope—hope for the present, and hope for the future.” He further preached that even though our nation had been attacked, we have the choice not to “implode and disintegrate emotionally and spiritually as a people and a nation,” but to choose to become stronger and to remember that the foundation of the nation is our trust in God.

President Bush nuances Graham’s sermon with his remarks that, first, our duty to history is “to answer these attacks and rid the world of evil,” and second, to remain firmly a nation of unity, to “feel what Franklin Roosevelt called the warm courage of national unity.” Prayer, for the President, was a way to “ask God to watch over our nation, and grant us patience and resolve in all that is to come.” Bush’s remarks were not a call to humility and patience, but to the patience of resolve in our responsibility of ridding the world of evil.

Washington National Cathedral is no stranger to controversy and it has not categorically denied the pulpit to controversial messages and messengers, but Cathedral Dean Baxter quickly moved to change Bush’s 9/11 rhetoric back to one of humility and patience. Equally important was that WNC was no stranger to the call to war. The idea of “just war” made its way into Cathedral rhetoric during WWII. The Rt. Rev. (Bishop) Freeman offered a sermon in the dark winter of 1941 wherein he outlined the best way to “guard the trust” that has been placed in our hands on the eve of war. For Freeman, evaluating how to go about guarding the trust of our American and democratic ideals, depended on the ability to be “detached, unresponsive to propaganda and the allurements of alien influences, however persistent their blandishments or 

---

185 Taken from the National Day of Prayer and Remembrance Service, 9/14/01, booklet., p. 10.
urgent their claims.” Freeman pointed out the sad misfortune that “the assumptions of proud isolations cannot and do not afford security to peace-loving peoples when confidence is destroyed and the whole structure of civilized society is imperiled.” Further, ideals are indispensable to the ways of orderly living and therefore they must be preserved. But Freeman warned that the nation’s strength resides less on its people, industry, and intellectual genius, and more in the “moral and religious character of our people.” What has made America-the-nation has to do with “the maintenance of civic virtue, obedience to constituted authority and a life regulated by strong moral and religious convictions.” Freeman explained this is because, as Edith Cavell stated on the eve of her execution, “Standing on the brink of eternity I have come to realize that patriotism is not enough.” There is more, for Bishop Freeman, than simply protecting our borders, wealth, and advantage in the world’s stage because no nation in history has survived long once it has lost touch with its moral foundation. Therefore, understanding why the nation must go to war and fight is imperative, and, more importantly, is the awareness that without moral guidance, we simply become as the enemy.186

Considering Freeman’s points regarding war sixty years earlier, remarks that ring true today, and considering Bush’s (almost) call to war, Baxter felt obligated to once again define what is meant by “just” and by “war” because President Bush’s remarks from the Cathedral lectern announcing our duty to rid the world of evil without the understanding of a moral foundation and based only on the ideals of freedom and democracy did not sit well with Dean Baxter. Therefore, the following Sunday, Baxter began to repair the premise on which Bush’s speech lay. First, Baxter reminds the congregation of the biblical stories of a shepherd leaving his flock

of ninety-nine sheep to seek the one lost, pointing out that God values each soul, the innocent and the guilty. Baxter’s sermon ponders over the many who, after the terrorist attacks, now know the fear of “the evil of terror, violence, and mass destruction at work and home.” Having lost our sense of impregnability, he reiterates Freeman’s point from World War II that, “We must lay aside the quick, potent energy of blind rage and revenge that can only power us to make hasty judgments [lest we] become a society of emotional and spiritual cripples.” He mentions that although Bush’s resolve is to seek justice rather than revenge, there is still that problem of “evil,” and this leads Baxter to further remark that despite Bush’s justice rhetoric, it is important to understand that “justice is never just about us, no matter what tragedy befalls us. When it is ‘just about us,’ it ceases to be justice and becomes mere blind retribution and vengeance, and more innocents suffer” (Baxter N. D., 2002, p. 17). This is because when we act without “the light of our spiritual values and accountability to the larger community, we become the evil we deplore in the search for justice” (p. 17). Further, “evil does not wear a turban, a tunic, a yarmulke, or a cross...[It] wears the garment of a human heart” (p. 19). In a nation of incredible diversity, this is important to remember, especially for a cathedral claiming to be the spiritual cradle for that diversity of people and faith.

Rhetorical othering is a common way of understanding what is happening in both Bush’s and Baxter’s speeches. In this moment, when “the other” is so vague, so abstract that we can only declare against an abstract idea, the need to identify both “them” and “us” is important. Kenneth Burke points this out in his essay, “The Rhetoric of Hitler’s ‘Battle,’” when he states that it is never enough to simply have Rome; Rome must be identified by what is not Rome—the common enemy (Burke K., 2005). The problem for 9/11 was that the enemy was a man not
attached to a country, but was attached to terrorist camps in several countries; it is also an abstract—terrorism—as defined by a perceived victim. The problem with that problem was that the identifier of the enemy quickly became Islam and dark men with beards and turbans, although there were claims that Americans caused their own terror.

Bush has identified “them” as the “evil ones.” Baxter has identified “us” as those with a moral compass making people without a moral compass evil. Both assume that “we” are “the good” either because we are the lovers of freedom and democracy or because we are a spiritual and moral people. The quick difference between the two, of course, is that Baxter sees the capacity for a good people to be evil, to become the evil they deplore, unless they identify as the kind of people who are able to remember their spiritual and moral foundations. Unity of a people cannot happen without an understanding of what makes a unity of people; how are the united people defined? One of the most basic and cherished characteristics of WNC has been its insistence that the unity it represents defines the American ideal that a moral people are just in their actions. Surely Sayre’s actions through the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s, demonstrated that. We are only as good as our actions, not our words, reveal. Unless the people are mindful of their moral compass, represented in this case by the Cathedral and its higher moral call, Baxter has made clear it is easy to lose sight of the morality or immorality of our actions by relying only on a secular definition of justice.

Two weeks after the terrorist attacks, Baxter once again stood at the Canterbury Pulpit and offered a brief review of WNC’s identity as beginning with George Washington and L’Enfant, with Theodore Roosevelt celebrating the dream of Washington and a band of Episcopalians. Throughout its history, the Cathedral had tried hard to understand L’Enfant’s plan for
“a church for national purposes...without distinction to denomination or sect; but...equally open to all” (Baxter N. D., 2002, p. 24).\textsuperscript{187} WNC has been open to many voices, and yet, he states, “we all know in our hearts these times are like no other time in our history.” What is more, at this time, Baxter notes that for many, seeing the faces and hearing the stories of those who died on 9/11 has caused a renewed sense of America as “family.” It is good, he said, to take a good look at that “family,” to examine ourselves. He again works hard to reinforce the understanding that evil is not a thing or a person; it is instead a “spiritual reality,” a loss of connection with divine truth. As humans, we all are capable of love and hope, but we also are equally capable of hate and destruction. Uncovering the stories of any American family confirms Baxter’s point.

Within two weeks of the acts on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, Congress conferred Executive authority to engage in military force. In fact, the measure passed without one single dissent and without any debate (vonDrehle, 2001). Secretary of State Colin Powell began working on an international coalition with the aim of a general war on terrorism (vonDrehle, 2001). As people the world over offered emotional condolences, Americans began to filter the information coming out about Bin Laden and the nineteen hijackers. On the occasion of the ninety-fourth year of the Cathedral’s existence and three weeks after the attacks, on September 30, 2001, Baxter sermonizes that “the recognition of evil makes us take God and our spiritual life more seriously, [and that] bombing, better intelligence, and economic sanctions may eventually slow or hamper specific acts of terrorism in the world. But they will not remove the conditions which incubate such evil passions and keep alive twisted moral justifications for

\textsuperscript{187} All references to Baxter’s 9/11 sermons are taken from this source.
the destruction of innocent people” (p. 25-26). Arguing against the long-held belief that America’s fortunes come from some renewed covenant with the Pilgrims, Baxter warns that “the assumption that good fortune equals divine favor or moral superiority is very dangerous” (p. 27). That is why, for Baxter, it is so important to understand that our strength is not in our wealth, and fancy buildings, and movie stars, but in “the heart and convictions of a people’s soul.” We know this, he finishes, because upon seeing the destruction of buildings, the nation turned to its churches because the nation’s real power, the power of hope, lay there, not in office buildings, which are symbols of mere economic power.

In the history of Cathedral sermons, there is nothing radically new in Baxter’s message. He is reiterating the same theme about our nation being dependent upon the moral characteristic of its people and that there is no moral character to uphold without the religious impulse. It is apparent that repeating this message to each successive generation is part of WNC’s job just as it is to keep the doors open for the prayers of all who feel the need to enter. There is, however, that not so subtle hint that the fact of our American-ness does not made us God’s favorites. The old sense of moral superiority in our Christianity, or our sense of moral compass, has suddenly disappeared from Cathedral rhetoric.

Over the course of that first year after the attacks, Baxter continued to speak of the humility and introspection required to understand the terror we were forced to fight. Responding to the comments by Pat Robertson and Jerry Falwell that “we have insulted God” and that “abortionists, feminists, homosexuals, the American Civil Liberties Union, and Christian liberals...allow the enemies of America to give us probably what we deserve” (p. 31-32, see also Harris, 2001), Baxter warns against thinking in black and white, good and evil perspectives. This
type of thinking leads not to fundamentalism, but to fanaticism. Scapegoating the people who force change is an easy way to associate change with evil, but Cathedral rhetoric has never been afraid of change, and so, Baxter is careful to point out that evil is not the person or organization of change, waking us up and forcing us toward moral introspection. Evil is a spiritual force acting to “intentionally destroy life, liberty, and happiness,” values that are paramount as American ideals. Evil, just like good, is dependent upon human choice, and that is why Baxter reported that Americans must take God and our spiritual life more seriously.

As a final example of Baxter’s attempt to change or redirect the rhetoric of hate, anger, evil, and vengeance, on Palm Sunday 2002, he tells two stories that bring home what the Cathedral’s role is other than to speak a message of peace. First, Baxter relates that when he sees on television tragedies of people in other countries, what he remembers most is “the primal wailing, of mothers, fathers and wives and other loved ones. This I remember more than the macho railings and the shaking of fists or guns. This shaking of fists is the arrogant anger that believes the answer to evil is to mirror horror to horror. But truer than macho anger is the deep primal moan or wail of the soul’s recognition that humanity is perpetually vulnerable to evil” (p. 62).

His point is that evil does not serve man; rather, man serves evil—an awful price to pay for machismo. The wails of loss occur on both sides of any fight. The second story he tells in his Palm Sunday sermon is that of Nadezhda Mandelstam, who lived through Stalin’s Great Purge in 1937-1938, watching her husband be brutally tortured to die a slow and horrendous death. In her book, *Hope against Hope*, she writes of the human scream:
This pitiful sound...is a concentrated expression of the last vestige of human dignity. It is a man’s way of leaving a trace, of telling people how he lived and died. By his screams he asserts his right to live, sends a message [from the soul] to the outside demanding help and calling for resistance. If nothing else is left, one must scream. For the world to hear! For God to hear! Silence is the real crime against humanity (as quoted in Baxter N. D., 2002, p. 62).

For Washington National Cathedral, this poignant set of stories defines exactly what the role of the Cathedral is for the nation in a post 9/11 world—to act as a moral compass, to combat the temptations of evil, but by way of reason and human dignity and in the understanding that death and destruction are final and horrific for all humanity. Baxter has made clear that focusing on the tarzanic breast beating of a maddened conscience ignores the fact that we can lose sight of the moral purpose our maddened conscience seeks. This is reminiscent of Sayre’s call to conscience in Nixon’s choice to bomb Hanoi in 1972. We must be constantly reminded of our moral sense, but Baxter recognizes that after 9/11, although the devil has changed from “communism” to “terrorism,” and unlike the idea that Americans could be perceived as communists, now Americans can be guilty of terrorism just as surely as the “other.” Of course, this was true in 1972, but Sayre never made the claim. Baxter now does.

Michael Hyde, in Perfection, tells us that “cases of conscience” requires us to be able to collaboratively determine and to be rhetorically competent enough to achieve the end of “de-liberat[ing] about the meaning of the moral precepts found in a text and those precepts’ relationship to everyday existence” (Hyde, 2010, p. 59). It is entirely possible to aim too morally high to be sensible to reality. For instance, it is possible to act through a “sense of honor” to
the degree of failing to judge reasonably (Mausbach, 1914).\textsuperscript{188} Baxter’s sermons required that degree of moral reasonableness without insulting the genuine pain felt while at the same time retaining the ability to place that pain in perspective. To that end there is a condensation of rhetorical appeals that begins to show up in the twenty-first century identity of WNC. Baxter has repeatedly served the same theme: be just and remain moral; do not seek revenge and become evil; and remember our common humanity. It is these themes that eventually lead WNC to create its newest identity to be a “spiritually-generous Christianity.”

Of course, as a sermon, Baxter’s rhetoric was offered to a specific audience, one that purposely walked into the rhetorical situation by arriving at the Cathedral during a scheduled service, and one that allowed a listener equal freedom to walk out if the message was distasteful or unsatisfactory. To a certain extent, we may assume that Baxter was “preaching to the choir,” an audience already in agreement by their identifiable Christian orEpiscopalian belief system. For any other church, at least, this may be so. For WNC, however, this may very well not be the exact case since WNC did not, at that time, have a formal parish congregation, being open for anyone from anywhere to walk in, as a house of prayer for all people. Nevertheless, there must be an assumption for the preacher that the audience recognizes certain religious certainties. Those certainties are condensed into phrases or parables that are readily known even to those without religious background. Belief is not necessary to attain familiarity. For example, at Christmas, amidst all the bustle of buying and traveling, even the hardiest atheist

\textsuperscript{188} The example given is that “An officer shot down another, who had insulted his brother, in order to save this brother from fighting a duel, the result of which would probably have been fatal to him. The motives for this action were apparently noble—love for his brother and the brother’s family, courage and self-sacrifice even to the point of giving up his own happiness in life. But in the whole folly of dueling (sic) so much stress is laid upon the sense of honour (sic) that people fail to judge the fact reasonably. They overlook the fact that it is possible for an action to be in itself so reprehensible that no nobility of motive can make it objectively excusable.” The example is apropos to the current situation.
knows that Christians believe the day celebrates Jesus’ birth. This birth is irrelevant to the atheist, but the story is translated broadly into concepts of peace, goodwill, love, family, giving, and joy. When Dean Baxter speaks from the Canterbury Pulpit of the spirit of a people or nation, of justice without vengeance, and the primal wailing of mothers, the allusions between the tragedy of 9/11 and any of the tragedies of the Bible are easily recognized. There is no social world that is immune to the baseness of humanity, and, at the most intimate level, for those like Ms. Mandelstam and the relatives of those who died on 9/11, the absence of belief in a higher order leads to the absence of soul. It is importance that WNC represent the nation’s “soul,” so that the nation does not devolve into soullessness.

Reverend Baxter’s sermons are not well-known in rhetorical circles. They are not a major rhetorical product and most likely not much different than so many other sermons delivered from so many other pulpits across the nation in the year following the 9/11 attacks. The most obvious difference is that Baxter’s sermons were delivered from the Canterbury Pulpit at WNC, arguably the most powerful and religiously important pulpit in the nation, holding a certain sense of nobles oblige due to its own self-proclaimed role. The message he offers has the potential to be as radical as Desmund Tutu’s sermon quoted at the beginning of this chapter when he said that God accepts all as his children—even Bin Laden and Hussein. The congregants cannot fire the dean, but they can write some fiery letters, as we saw during the Sayre years. They can walk out and write letters to the editor. But after Sayre, the succeeding deans are less volatile while they advocate. The Cathedral, in order to remain the nation’s cathedral, must speak a national rhetoric, one that does not alienate but instead embraces and reminds. Ca-
thedral rhetoric, beginning in 2001 becomes more generous and inclusive in its Christian message, while, at the same time, remaining a moralizing pulpit.

Dean Baxter published his sermons in book form, and it is that book that has created the new rhetorical symbol of WNC’s public identity. Even its title, “Comfort and Challenge,” condenses the overall message. Over the years WNC has established itself as that place where the nation’s religious spirit is protected and nourished, questioned and challenged. In order to fight terror justly, Americans must do more than “winning the hearts and minds”\(^\text{189}\) of the people whose nations we destroy while seeking out terrorists. It certainly means more than creating “smart bombs” that are computer driven to hit specific targets in the hope of missing innocent bystanders. Being just and fighting a just war in the twenty-first century, and for twenty-first century citizens, means we understand our human nature, the very essence of our human being, because only in that search do we understand how to find the evil that must be destroyed. Baxter’s sermons make this case by asking his audience to consider the narratives the Cathedral reveal by its very presence.

From a rhetorical viewpoint, Baxter’s sermons, to be rhetorically significant, must “contribute to what we know about rhetoric itself, the way it works, its limitations, special circumstances, or provide new insights into a text of recognized or arguable importance” (Darsey J. F., 1994). The case here is not Baxter’s sermons, but that Baxter’s sermons act as subtext for establishing an integral aspect of WNC’s character. Baxter’s sermons, unlike any other sermons, such as Freeman’s during World War II, work to underscore how the Cathedral acts spiritually in

\(^{189}\) Although most frequently remembered for Bush’s September 14, 2005 speech to the U.N. General Assembly, the term does not begin with him in American politics. It was used as a revolutionary call by John Adams, as a call to national solidarity by Franklin Roosevelt during the Great Depression, and as a call for national unity during the Cold War and Vietnam by John Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson. For more detail see http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2009/08/13/a_bright_shining_slogan.
a time of crisis as not only a national house of prayer for all the people, but an international house of prayer that underscores the commonalities of our global humanity—yet within a generous Christian context. That Christian context, as the admitted hegemonic discourse of our national spirituality, can be generously used by the Cathedral to consider all the other faiths. In this sense, Christianity, represented by the generous-spirited WNC, allows for the embracing of other faith traditions. Additionally, this aspect of Christianity is what our forefathers saw as the reason why this nation must succeed and what drives the democratic impulse. This is why, at least by the 2013 inaugural prayer service, so many faith traditions were able to pray together at WNC serving one ideal without a hint of controversy or sustained public chastisement—the inherent need for religious freedom and to live in a morally just society.

### 8.2 Renewed Activism

The boldness in asserting to be the nation’s spiritual home does not come without cost, of course. Not that WNC has chosen to be standard bearer for every controversy, but WNC has had its share of deans and bishops willing to make controversial stands. Not all have, of course. Civil Rights activism was important but not religiously radicalized and politicized as vitally important to the white population and churches until Dean Sayre took the helm. This is not to imply that the previous deans did not believe in civil rights, but that the idea of radical cathedral activism was not known.

Sayre was, if not comfortable, then not uncomfortable being a public megaphone for causes such as civil rights, education reform, and poverty initiatives. We’ve learned in Chapter 6 that he noisily advocated for Palestinian rights and refugees and spoke vociferously against Senator McCarthy when no one else seemed willing to do so. Now, the current dean’s, the
Very Rev. Gary Hall, activism and participation in a march against assault weapons and gun reform in Washington, D.C., the week after hosting the 2013 inaugural prayer service, although not timed well, was not surprising. Issues, such as marriage and divorce, the ordination of women and homosexual priests and bishops, and same-sex marriage, still incur the wrath and loss of traditionalist and conservative congregants, with the church losing not only parishioners, but entire congregations. Yet, WNC still chooses to speak out for those social and moral causes.

For the PEC and WNC, the ordination of women priests has been emotionally exhausting and doctrinally challenging. Supported by Dean Sayre and Bishop Creighton, dialogue and debate occurred throughout the 1960s and 1970s, culminating in a 1976 General Convention canonical change allowing the ordination of women priests and bishops, albeit only barely gaining the necessary votes (Freeman H., 1976). The canonical change allowed the Church to effectively deal with the fifteen women who were “irregularly” ordained the previous two years in Philadelphia and Washington, D.C.

In 1975, eleven women in Philadelphia and four women in Washington, D.C. were ordained into the priesthood without episcopal authority. Bishop [of Washington] William Creighton, although in agreement that women ought to be able to be ordained as priests, refused to recognize their priesthood and ordered them not to engage in any priestly duties (especially administering communion). Bishop Creighton gave as reason for his order that “It will make it more difficult to gain acceptance of women in the priesthood by the whole church” if the process was forced by virtue of radical action (Diocesan Press Service, 1975). He believed there was a better way to achieve their goal than by renegade action and was hopeful that the

---

190 Two marches occurred in Washington, D.C. in two days, competing with each other for attention—for gun control and anti-abortionists on the fortieth anniversary of the 1973 Supreme Court decision of Roe v. Wade.
planned dialogue for the 1976 General Convention concerning the ordination of women would solve the issue in a more accepted manner. The illegal ordination happened not at WNC, but at St. Stephen’s Episcopal Church. At an Ecclesiastical Court in the Diocese of Washington in a suit against the St. Stephen’s rector for allowing a female priest to celebrate Holy Communion in 1974, Bishop Creighton flatly declared on the witness stand that the canons of the Church were ambiguous and that “should the 1976 General Convention fail by all available means to put its seal of approval on the priesting of women, he will proceed to ordain Washington’s qualified female deacons, confident that such action is within his authority and that of the canons” (Diocesan Press Service, 1975). However, he was reluctant to do so unilaterally and without the support of the College of Bishops. Happily, for the bishop, all went as according to plan at the 1976 General Convention.

Bishop Creighton’s support of the ordination of women translated directly into WNC’s history when he ordained two women at the Cathedral as priests at the earliest opportunity after the canon just passed allowed—January 9, 1977. Not only did he ordain these two, he also recognized the ordinations of two (of four) of the women priests “irregularly” ordained in Washington, D.C. in 1975 (Hyer, 1977). While the bishop consecrated priests inside the church, Dean Sayre allowed a small group outside to quietly protest against the “priestesses,” a term hated by all at the Cathedral (Hyer, 1977). The newly recognized and ordained women accomplished a first for the Episcopal Church, and one of those women represented more of the miracle than the others.

The Rev. Dr. Pauli Murray was ordained by Bishop Creighton in Washington National Cathedral, but the fact of her sex was not all she represented. Murray was not only one of the
first women priests ordained in the Episcopal Church and WNC, she was also the first “Negro woman priest,” a term she insisted on using (Hyer, 1977). Rev. Murray not only counted doubly as both woman and Negro, she also counted as the first publicly admitted transgendered priest; although that was not a word in public dialogue at the time. She considered herself to have an “inverted sex instinct” that she defined not as homosexuality, but that she was a man attracted to women (Mack, 2012). Marking a trifecta of minority representations, Rev. Murray foretells the road to a theological sense of activism, rather than a social issue sense, by WNC.

The Cathedral celebrated the ordination of its first woman suffragan bishop, Jane Holmes Dixon, in 1992. Even though the Episcopal Church had been ordaining women legally since 1977, Dixon still endured discrimination while acting as a bishop of the Cathedral. With the retirement of Bishop Haines in 2000, Bishop Dixon became bishop pro tempore until the election of Bishop John Chane in 2002. Named one of *Washingtonian Magazine*’s Washingtonian of the Year in 2001, Dixon was praised for her interfaith work in the wake of 9/11 by sharing pulpits and altars with rabbis, imams, and priests of many faith traditions (Milk & Ryan, 2001). Still, there were those within the Episcopal Church that refused to accept communion from her, both lay and cleric alike. Additionally, although Dixon acted as bishop pro tempore she was not then elected as bishop; however, in 2011, the first female bishop of Washington, Rt. Rev. Mariann Budde, was elected and consecrated. There have not been any females named as cathedral dean, but the Episcopal Church elected Katharine Jefferts Schori as the first female Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church, whose seat is WNC. Since 1977, there have been any number of female priests, not all Episcopalian, who serve or have served at WNC, and at this time, a female priest, the Rev. Cannon Jan Cope, serves as Cathedral vicar.
Having supported the right of priesthood for women and homosexuals (including transsexuals), the Cathedral still did not automatically support same-sex marriage. The legal literature (Axel-Lute, 2012) on same-sex marriage places the beginning of the legal question as the 1993 Hawaii Supreme Court ruling that the state constitution must find a “compelling interest” in denying marriage benefits to same-sex couples. This led to the federal Defense of Marriage Act (1996) (also known as DOMA) that defined marriage as the legal union between two of the opposite sex. It also denied the requirement that a state must recognize a same-sex marriage performed in another state. Many states followed the federal DOMA by passing their own marriage acts. In 1999, Vermont’s Supreme Court held that the state must allow the same legal benefits to same-sex couples as heterosexual couples causing the state to create a “civil union status.” Connecticut followed suit one year later. In May of 2004, Massachusetts became the first state to legalize same-sex marriage. By the end of the 2012 election cycle, nine states, plus the District of Columbia, allowed same-sex marriages: Connecticut, Iowa, Massachusetts, Maine, Maryland, New Hampshire, New York, Vermont, and Washington. For a brief five and a half months in 2008, California allowed same-sex marriages, but this was reversed due to Proposition 8. Those marriages conducted during that brief time are legally recognized but none others are until Proposition 8 has been overturned, although California does allow for registered domestic partnerships (Marriage and relationships, 2013).\(^{191}\)

\(^{191}\) The U.S. Supreme Court decided to consider the issue of gay marriage in the 2012-2013 session. Using California’s Proposition 8 and court case Hollingsworth v. Perry as basis for the arguments, the Court heard testimony and various amicus curiae on the Defense of Marriage Act (1996) on Tuesday and Wednesday, March 26 and 27, 2013. Bishop Budde signed an amicus brief written by Episcopal bishops and Dean Hall participated and spoke at a rally in front of the Supreme Court on Tuesday, April 26 (personal communication with R. Weinberg, April 15, 2013). A decision has not been handed down as of the publication of this dissertation.
For the Episcopal Church the matter of same-sex relationships began in 1991 at the
General Convention. The House of Deputies resolved that, for the Episcopal Church,
Physical sexual expression is appropriate only within the lifelong monogamous union of
husband and wife in heart, body, and mind; intended by God for their mutual joy; for
the help and comfort given one another in prosperity and adversity and, when it is
God’s will, for the procreation of children and their nurture in the knowledge and love
of the lord, as set forth in the Book of Common Prayer (General Convention, 1991).
However, the Deputies also recognized that there was a “discontinuity” between this affirma-
tion and the reality for many members of the faith and this “discontinuity” ought to be further
investigated. To that end, the Convention mandated that parishes throughout the nation ought
to have dialogue on the matter and report findings to the following General Convention in 1994
(General Convention, 1991). I was chosen as a member of my parish in Central Texas to serve
on one of these dialoguing boards in 1992-93.

After almost a decade of dialogue, the Episcopal Church resolved in 2000 that the
Church must provide sanctuary for all persons, acknowledging the many couples living together
without the benefit of marriage. The Church held that, no matter the make-up of those rela-
tionships, they ought to be “characterized by fidelity, monogamy, mutual affection and respect,
careful, honest communication, and the holy love which enables those in such relationship to
see in each other the image of God.” Therefore, the Church denounced all relationships that
did not meet these characteristics, even while accepting that there are those who disagree with
this statement (General Convention, 2000). In 2006, the General Convention reaffirmed sup-
port of “gay and lesbian persons as children of God and entitled to full civil rights,” issuing an
apology on behalf of the Episcopal Church to gay and lesbian people “for years of rejection and maltreatment by the Church” (General Convention, 2006). Finally, in 2012, the General Convention approved an official liturgy for blessing same-sex unions. The liturgy is written in genderless language (A lifelong covenant, 2012) and is available for use only by clergy who preside in a diocese with an affirming bishop. Bishops maintain the ecclesiastic right to prohibit the celebration and blessing of same-sex unions (Goodstein, 2012).

At each step of the way, the bishop of Washington has concurred with the General Convention resolutions. Bishop Ronald Haines (1990-2000) ordained an openly lesbian priest in 1991 amid protests from the ordination congregants. He said of the occasion, “The ordination of one whose life style involves sexual relations outside of marriage troubles me greatly,” but after weighing in Elizabeth Carl’s character and priestly commitment, he decided to support her ordination (Schudel, 2008). In an interview with The Washington Post Bishop Haines confided that his discernment on the gay and lesbian question derived from his experience with a large and diverse diocese and his experience raising a gay son. Bishop Haines said, “I saw the pain and the anguish that comes with secret-keeping” (Schudel, 2008). Bishop John Chane (2002-2011) supported the consecration of Bishop Gene Robinson in 2003 and added liberal clergy to his staff, including Massachusetts Suffragan Bishop Barbara Harris. Additionally, of his own accord, he

---

192 In 1994, Bishop Haines son, Jeffrey, then 34, claimed in a news conference that from the age of eight to twenty he was sexually abused by an Episcopal priest. The Bishop stated at the conference that, “The betrayal by one we thought to be a family friend has been devastating. Jeffrey has struggled mightily to connect severed strands in his life. Our son was made to feel ashamed and guilty before God by an adult whom he admired. That abusive action foisted onto an unsuspecting youth has extracted a great price in terms of spiritual, psychological, physical pain.” See article found at: http://www.episcopalarchives.org/cgi-bin/ENS/ENSpresrelease.pl?pr_number=94158.

193 Bishop Harris was the first female bishop consecrated after the 1989 Lambeth Conference that declared the ordination of women to be the autonomous prerogative of each individual province of the Anglican Communion. She was a civil rights activist who also marched with Dr. King in Selma.
commissioned a diocesan same-sex marriage rite and in 2004 performed a same-sex marriage (Duin, 2010).

Same-sex marriage was legalized in Washington, D.C. late in 2009, but because the District is not a state (with state’s rights), the law had to undergo Congressional review (Urbina, 2010). In 1973, the U.S. Congress allowed the District of Columbia certain rights in an act referred to as the D.C. Home Rule Act (District of Columbia Home Rule Act, 1973/1997). Despite this generous accession of power, Congress reserved the right to limit certain District powers and exercise Congressional constitutional authority over any act by the District’s legislature (Sec. 601). Meant to relieve Congress from the minutiae of administering the District’s everyday needs, the District’s legislative powers cannot supersede or overturn federal powers. In light of the Defense of Marriage Act, immediate challenges to the law were made; but despite those challenges, Chief Justice Roberts denied a last-minute attempt to stay the law, allowing same-sex marriage licenses to be issued beginning March 3, 2010 (Roberts denies stay of same-sex marriage law, 2010). Justice Robert’s comment on the law confirmed the right of the District to maintain laws that support the D.C. Human Rights Act that prohibits discrimination. Although Roberts affirmed that the law was still being considered by the D.C. Court of Appeals, he stressed that this was not the time for the U.S. Supreme Court to get involved in the issue of same-sex marriage. A joint resolution by Congress can block the law, but even Congress, Roberts noted, had chosen not to act on the matter. Still, the matter continued to be considered by the Court of Appeals, and this worried WNC representatives.
Feeling strongly about same-sex marriages and responding to the several challenged attempts to legally define marriage as between one man and one woman, Chane offered a powerful statement published in The Washington Post in 2009 in which he argued:

I have been addressing the sound theological foundation for a new religious understanding of marriage, because it disturbs me greatly to see opposition to marriage for same-sex couples portrayed as the only genuinely religious or Christian position. I am somewhat awed by the breadth of religious belief and life experience reflected among more than 200 clergy colleagues who are publicly supporting marriage equality in D.C.

But it's important to emphasize that the actions taken by the D.C. Council do not address the religious meaning of marriage at all. The proposed legislation would not force any congregation to change its religious teachings or bless any couple. Our current laws do not force any denomination to offer religious blessing to second marriages, yet those marriages, like interfaith marriages, are equal in the sight of the law even though some churches do not consider them religiously valid.

Existing laws require religious organizations that receive public funding to extend the same benefits to gay employees as to straight ones. In many instances, that includes health care for spouses. This has led some religious leaders, who believe same-sex marriage to be sinful, to threaten to get out of the social service business. I respect these individuals' right to their convictions, but I do not follow their logic. The Catholic Church, for instance, teaches that remarriage without an annulment is sinful, yet it has not campaigned against extending health benefits to such couples. Additionally, several Catholic
dioceses in states that permit same-sex marriage have found a way to accommodate themselves to such laws.

D.C.'s proposed marriage equality law explicitly protects the religious liberty of those who believe that God's love can be reflected in the loving commitment between two people of the same sex and of those who do not find God there. This is as it should be in a society so deeply rooted in the principles of religious freedom and equality under the law (Chane J., 2009).

Bishop Chane threaded the Roman Catholic narrative into his argument because it represents the strongest opposition to same-sex marriage, basing its thesis on procreation theology (Cordileone, 2011). Chane also carefully follows the long refrain in Cathedral rhetoric of a commitment to moral principles, with independence from, but obedience to, the state, and tolerance for multiple and diverse voices. Not invoking George Washington here and instead relying on one hundred years of Cathedral rhetoric shows the narrative transitioning, placing Cathedral rhetoric as primary argument. Chane could have quoted old George, though, and maintained the narrative thread. In a response letter to Baltimore (Roman Catholic) Bishop John Carroll on the occasion of Washington’s election as the nation’s first president, he wrote,

As mankind becomes more liberal they will be more apt to allow that all those who conduct themselves as worthy members of the community are equally entitled to the protection of civil government. I hope ever to see America among the foremost nations in examples of justice and liberality” (Washington, 1790).

Meaning to affirm the contributions of Roman Catholics in the war for independence (Matysek, 2011), George Washington made no more controversial argument than Chane in his affirmation
of the gay and lesbian communities. If Chane had used Washington’s letter, his line of arguments using Roman Catholic responses to same-sex marriage could have been even more powerful.

Finally, with the official approval of a same-sex covenant liturgy by the bishops at the 2012 General Convention, and in the general urgency that the opposition and Congressional review mandated by the District’s Home Rule Act infused into the situation, Bishop Mariann Budde authorized same-sex marriages to take place in the diocese of Washington (Sommers, 2013). Following Budde’s approval, Cathedral Dean Gary Hall authorized same-sex weddings at WNC (Appendix O). The announcement, considering the positions taken by the last three bishops of Washington could not be too much of a surprise. What did come as a surprise was the public revelation that the Cathedral had already hosted a same-sex wedding officiated by Bishop Chane.\(^{194}\) The private wedding was of two Cathedral employees—a horticulturist and an IT professional—and included about two hundred guests (Dvorak, 2013). The ceremony was conducted only after ecclesiastic approval and there was confirmation that the couple otherwise fulfilled the requisite characteristics of a committed relationship to the ideals of monogamy, fidelity, honesty, and love enabling the couple to “see in each other the image of God” (Richard Weinberg, personal communication, April 15, 2013).

Tracked since 2001, Pew Research shows that a shift occurred in 2011 regarding national attitudes on same-sex marriage. Today, although still greatly divided, there is a slight edge for greater support than opposition, with 48% in favor and 43% opposed (Pew Research Center, 2013).

\(^{194}\) A 2013 *Washington Post* article claimed the wedding took place three years ago, while a 2010 Post article claims Chane performed a same-sex wedding in 2004. I do not know if these two articles refer to the same ceremony or two different ceremonies. Considering the history of same-sex weddings, there is not a verifiable source to confirm the data. Same-sex marriage was not legal in D.C. until 2009.
As for different religious groups, white mainline Protestants, this includes the Episcopal Church, support same-sex marriage by slightly more than half, or 52%. The Cathedral is mindful of its own denominational support, but it also is supportive of those non-religiously affiliated attitudes, the spiritual but not religious group, that overwhelmingly support same-sex marriage, by 73%. However, the Rev. Ruth Meyers, one of the liturgists overseeing the writing of the same-sex blessing of “A lifelong covenant,” was quick to explain that although the newly written liturgy contains many aspects of the traditional marriage rite, it is not considered marriage; it is the blessing of a monogamous and faithful life-long relationship. The Church still considers “marriage” a union of husband and wife, or man and woman. Even so, there is still dissension among some members and bishops that despite the rhetoric announcing it is a blessing, the wider population sees the step as acceptance of same-sex marriage. This concern is astute since the vast majority of media outlets all used the term “same-sex-marriage” in their reporting, immediately equating weddings with marriage. Yet, WNC did not go out of its way to correct the impression since, in the District of Columbia, same-sex marriage is legal and, for WNC, the ceremony confers the sacrament of marriage in a state that recognizes and legalizes same-

---

sex marriage.¹⁹⁶ The liturgy approved by the General Convention, and a liturgy that Cathedral Dean Gary Hall helped write, blesses a “covenant” and is devoid of gender terms:

Dear friends in Christ,

We have gathered today to witness [name] and [name] publicly committing themselves to one another and, in the name of the Church, to bless their union:

A relationship of mutual fidelity and steadfast love, forsaking all others, holding one another in tenderness and respect, in strength and bravery, as long as they live.

Therefore, in the name of Christ, let us pray that they may be strengthened for the promises they make this day, and that we will have the generosity to support them in what they undertake and the wisdom to see God at work in their life together.

Having approved of the sentiment for the blessing of same-sex unions, and in consideration of the fact of legal same-sex marriage in Washington, D.C., Bishop Budde authorized her diocese [of Washington] to conduct same-sex marriages on Church ground, and Dean Hall, following her lead, duly authorized same-sex weddings at WNC—provided, of course, that the couples follow the exact same requirements that all other couples must meet for the nuptial blessing of marriage vows (Appendix O).

Reactions to the Cathedral’s announcement ran from “What took so long?” (Dvorak, 2013), to demands that the government quit funding WNC (Weber, 2013), to “Why is National Cathedral always in the news as if it is our national cathedral? Whatever happened to separ-

¹⁹⁶ In the United States, no church can “legally” officiate a marriage. The legal aspect of marriage is done through the state with the purchase of a license which is then registered after an authorized civil servant has conducted the vows. Almost all religious are registered as civil servants of the state with the authority to witness the legal exchange of vows. Christian church “weddings” are the public witness of a couple’s marriage vows and a bestowing of God’s blessings upon the union.
tion of church and state?” (Mattingly, 2013). So far, no new church parishes have threatened to leave the Episcopal Church, which was the case when the Rt. Rev. Gene Robinson was consecrated bishop in 2003. Time will tell whether the Cathedral more significantly reflects national attitudes or reacted too quickly on a still delicate subject. Either way, WNC remains intentional in its rhetorical and theological witness to same-sex marriage (Richard Weinberg, personal communication, April 15, 2013).

Considering the “reconciliation and healing” theme the Cathedral advocates in the post 9/11 world, the same-sex wedding announcement is consistent with “generous-spirited Christianity” narrative the Cathedral now offers. But this is not the only example of what the Cathedral means by their new mission statement. Several years before the same-sex marriage decision, but long after its stance on clerical ordination for females, this very theme of reconciliation and healing based on a generous-spirited Christianity, served as justification for Bishop Chane to extend an invitation to one of the more controversial Muslim figures of our time, former Iranian President, Mohammad Khatami.

The press release from WNC on August 22, 2006 announced that the former Iranian President Mohammad Khatami would be presenting an address on September 7, 2006 and that attendance was by invitation only. Those invitations had already been made and no additional invitations would be forthcoming. The release went on to call Khatami “the first reformist president following the 1979 Islamic Revolution” enjoying broad home support of women and young adults due to his promotion of the “rule of law, democracy, and the inclusion of all Iranians in the political decision-making process” (Washington National Cathedral (a), 2006). Left out is the fact that Khatami was president of Iran in 2001 when President Bush included Iran in
the triplet called the “axis of evil.” Instead, the press release spoke of Khatami’s intent to speak on the role “the three Abrahamic faiths can play in shaping peace throughout the world.” This was justified by reminding the public that “The Cathedral is a place of reconciliation that opens its doors to people of all faiths...We have found that the Cathedral is an important platform for dialogue and open discussion.”

The Cathedral’s openness to Abrahamic faith dialogue is well established. Certainly openness to Christian-Jewish dialogue and cooperation goes back to the 1940s and 1950s when Washington Hebrew Congregation regularly met at Washington Cathedral for services while their own synagogue was being built (see Chapter 5.3). Earnest consideration for Muslim dialogue began when Dean Sayre went to the Holy Land to report on the Palestinian refugee conditions in the mid-1950s. He brought great consternation and controversy to the Cathedral when he placed blame for the Palestinian Muslim refugee problems squarely on the Jewish shoulder. But after September 11, 2001, there became an awareness that the U.S., as a whole, did not understand the Islamic faith and was woefully ignorant of its tenants. Therefore, WNC began a dedicated program of open dialogue in regard to the Abrahamic faiths.

In 2003, WNC hosted a three-part lecture series titled, “The Abrahamic Traditions: A comparison of faiths,” wherein the three faiths of Christianity, Judaism, and Islam each were explored one at a time over a three-week period in October. Bishop Jean Dixon (Bishop of Washington), Imam Yahya Hendi (Muslim chaplain at Georgetown University), and Rabbi Jack Moline (of Agudas Achim Congregation in Alexandria, VA) took turns speaking on behalf of their Abrahamic faith.
Until 2006, when Khatami came to speak at WNC, only American or conservative Muslim representatives had spoken, lecture style, at the Cathedral. Khatami’s 2006 invitation and lecture is different than the short participatory examples from prayer services and the 2003 Abrahamic lecture series.

At the end of Khatami’s two terms as Iranian president, he joined the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations, a cooperative established in 2005 aiming to improve understanding and relationships between nations and people in an attempt to counter the forces that fuel polarization and extremism (UNAOC, 2012). At the third meeting of the UNAOC in May 2006, Khatami addressed the alliance and boldly stated, “Any society, culture or civilization who considers itself to be pure good and others to be absolute evil can never know “others,” and moreover will even fall short of knowing itself” (Khatami M., 2006). The willingness to learn about “others,” for Khatami, is necessary in order to understand the self. Sounding much like reason and not like radicalism, and mirroring Baxter’s post-9/11 rhetoric, Khatami was invited to speak at WNC after the two-day UNAOC conference being held in New York. Several days before the conference in New York, Khatami addressed the Islamic Society of North America’s 43rd Annual Convention in Chicago. He aroused patriotic mistrust when he made the statement that “As America claims to be fighting terrorism, it implements policies that cause the intensification of terrorism and institutional violence” (AP, 2006). Speaking at Harvard University several days after WNC, Khatami reportedly responded to a question regarding the current Iranian president’s stance of wiping Israel off the map, that he believed no country should be wiped off the map, including Palestine. Regarding Islamic laws on homosexuality, he said that although homosexuality is against the law and is a punishable crime, the conditions for execution are so
strict as to be “virtually impossible to meet.” He stated that punishment by execution for homosexual acts is debatable” (Guehenno, 2006), meaning it is still on the table.

Washington National Cathedral is, however, not only a house of prayer for all people and the spiritual home of the nation; it is, according to its mission statement, generously spirited in the hope of forming religious reconciliation. That generosity translated, for the bishop of Washington and the Cathedral dean, into often painful dialogue. That painful dialogue creates the means to learning about the self through learning about the other. If not being self-reflective, WNC can at least be credited with encouraging active interfaith dialogue and education of “the other.”

Khatami’s address opened with the statement that the reality of human existence is not defined through one philosophy, for this limits the narrative of humankind. The Western reliance on “European rationalism and logocentrism belonging to an era before post-modernism” makes the West “the greatest victim of over-reliance on reason...deprive[ing] reason of every credit and privilege that was once bestowed on it” (Khatami S. M., 2006). Having divided the world into East and West, the Orient and the Occident, Khatami claims that making one way of inquiry superior to the other, regardless of which side makes the superiority claim, reduces the dialogue and the potential of reconciliation and understanding by half.

The reasonableness of Khatami’s argument, the desire to gather at the round table of dialogue, feeds into WNC’s newest understanding of national purposes. Cathedral Dean Samuel Lloyd, in his remarks following Khatami’s, states that even if the nations of Iran and the United States are unable to dialogue their differences, then there is a greater necessity of dialogue between the faiths because the absolute lack of dialogue is paramount to a perpetual state of
war and human strife. The ministry of the Cathedral is of reconciliation, requiring us “to seek partners, to take risks, to hear what these potential partners say, and to examine what they do. And requires us to submit ourselves to the same searching scrutiny” (Lloyd, 2006). It is to acknowledge the humanity of the “other,” and to be open to “all people.”

Bishop Chane concludes, after Khatami’s and Lloyd’s addresses, that worries about the use of the Cathedral for political purposes are misplaced. Speaking of world peace is not necessarily a political argument. Yet, again, perhaps the best place to have the discussion on the differences between the two world philosophies (of the Orient and the Occident) is a cathedral. Cathedrals, Chane argues, “are the places, and probably the only places left in the world, where the sacred and the secular can and must meet, to touch one another and then ultimately be embraced by the divine” (Chane J. B., 2006). Why cathedrals per se are the logical entities for this divine connection is not a part of his speech; Chane, no doubt, assumes that as the nation’s spiritual home, and as that spiritually enlightening Gothic cathedral, WNC serves the most logical place for those weighty moral dialogues. In this way, the narrative begun by George Washington that “Of all the dispositions and habits which lead to political prosperity, religion and morality are indispensable supports” continues to be an important aspect of Cathedral narrative. Especially in a post 9/11 world, Washington proves prophetic in saying that “whatever may be conceded to the influence of refined education on minds of peculiar structure, reason and experience both forbid us to expect that national morality can prevail in exclusion of religious principle” (Washington, Farewell Address, 1796). WNC would add to that sentiment that excluding some forms of religious principle works counter to American ideals. Certainly, the continuous rhetorical narrative of WNC derives from these admonitions by the nation’s first
president. Perhaps not all cathedrals find their mission is to serve in providing access to the divine by all people; but WNC has placed its primary mission work to be this nation’s *axis mundi*, in many various spiritual forms. To this end, WNC has called forth two Inter-Religious Calls and Commitment to Action conferences in 2010 and 2012. These conferences continue the Christian-Muslim dialogue.
CHAPTER 9: CONCLUSION—ENVISIONING THE FUTURE

9.1 WNC as National Spiritual Monument

“Angels needed. During its more than 100-year history the Cathedral has been supported on the wings of angels near and far. Angels are once again needed to restore this national treasure. Will you be an angel?”

On August 23, 2011, as the Cathedral was preparing for the September 11 memorial services and Martin Luther King’s memorial dedication, an earthquake having a 5.3 magnitude, shook Washington, D.C. dangerously damaging WNC. Not only did both ceremonies have to be moved from the Cathedral, the Cathedral had to be closed for observation, evaluation, and repair. Regular services were moved to Washington Hebrew Congregation (ever the friend of WNC). The MLK memorial celebration was moved to the Roman Catholic Basilica Shrine of the Immaculate Conception. The 9/11 service was moved to the Kennedy Center, but the Cathedral was still present in the secular auditorium revealing that the Cathedral’s ethos is now able to transcend the building and can be taken to another venue.

The spires of the Cathedral are the highest points in Washington, D.C. and as such served as one of the release points for the earthquake. Survey of the Cathedral immediately following the earthquake revealed that three of the four pinnacles on the central (Gloria in Excelsis) tower—the highest points—had broken off and had fallen onto the roof; some of the flying buttresses had major cracks, especially around the oldest part at the apse; one of the large finials from the northwest, or St. Peter, tower had fallen all the way to the ground becoming

---

197 From inside the front cover of The Cathedral Age, Special Edition 2011.
198 The other energy release point being the Washington Monument.
imbedded; and several of the Cathedral’s exterior sculptures and carvings were damaged, some of which also had fallen to the ground, including one of the carved angels.\textsuperscript{199} The following Monday, August 29, WNC announced its first online webinar as the Cathedral’s Mason Foreman, Joe Alonso, walked observers through the surveyed damage showing what the necessary repairs would involve. The thirty-six minute webinar took the camera up to the roof of the Cathedral showing damage that Sr. Director of Finance, Andrew Hullinger, described as “stunning” and “jaw dropping.”\textsuperscript{200} When asked where the money for repairs was to come, Dean Lloyd responded that the Cathedral was built stone by stone paid for by the contributions of thousands of people and that this is what made this cathedral a national cathedral. Repair funding would come again from the donations of countless of Americans sending their contributions, dollar at a time.\textsuperscript{201} Currently, as the earthquake forced logistical changes within the Cathedral, the “fallen angel” resides in the newly re-modeled museum/store as a focal point of the need for constant support by the many people across the nation, and even around the world, to repair and maintain all that the Cathedral represents. In a private interview, Director of Communications, Richard Weinberg stated that this angel would forever remain as part of the Cathedral museum exhibit and a new angel will be carved and installed in her place (personal communication, April 15, 2013).

Bishop Budde wrote in \textit{The Cathedral Age 2011 Special Edition} that the “calamity wrought by the earthquake” forced the Cathedral to clarify its vision. Her clarification of vision

\textsuperscript{199} Email message sent to me, as a “friend of the Cathedral,” on Wednesday, 24 August 2011. A more extensive survey of the damage later revealed that all four pinnacles on the central tower were damaged.

\textsuperscript{200} See the webinar at \url{http://www.nationalcathedral.org/exec/cathedral/mediaPlayer?MediaID=MED-SAVKQ-EM000D&EventID=CAL-SAVKO-EK000A}.

reflects a purpose that completely separates the Cathedral from any kind of civil religious sense to a completely religious one. Budde calls the Cathedral

> An icon, a symbol and mediator of holiness...a sacrament, an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace...one of those “thin places” where the veil between heaven and earth is lifted and where, for a moment, we can see the world and one another as God sees us...a place of pilgrimage...and a space that can help us be still and know that God is God” (p. 2).

Gone is the vision of the Cathedral as an “American Westminster Abbey;” it is a place of prayer and spirituality. Although the Cathedral bishop calls the Cathedral “a national treasure,” there is no reference to the place as a national monument.

The new symbol of WNC becomes the picture of the “fallen angel;” not fallen as in representing evil, but fallen in the sense that it is made of human hands by people, and therefore imperfect. One of the “angels” of the Cathedral was the Washington Hebrew Congregation, located near the Cathedral. WNC has a regular congregation of about a thousand and finding a place for a thousand people to meet, several times, is difficult and further complicated by the fact that few local churches could accommodate a group this size, especially with such short notice. Cathedral vicar, the Rev. Cannon Jan Cope, referred to Hebrew Congregation as a “first responder” for the Washington community following 9/11. For WNC, Hebrew Congregation was also a first responder after the earthquake inviting the Cathedral’s congregation to meet there on Sundays, since, unlike local Christian churches, the synagogue is not in use on Sundays. For four Sundays, while the Cathedral was closed for inspection, WNC was transferred to Washington Hebrew Congregation.
The earthquake was accompanied by Hurricane Irene just a few days later. The combination earthquake/hurricane caused many events in the D.C. area to undergo changes, including the Cathedral’s planned three-day “Call to Compassion” commemorating the tenth anniversary of 9/11 and the dedication for the newly installed Martin Luther King Memorial at the Washington Mall. Both events were to be held at WNC. The King Memorial dedication was moved to the Basilica Shrine of the Immaculate Conception and the Sunday concert ending the Call to Compassion weekend, “A Concert for Hope,” was moved to the Kennedy Center. The planned Saturday events were cancelled altogether.

The Sunday evening September 11, 2011 “Concert for Hope” included the Marine Chamber Orchestra, country singer Alan Jackson, opera singer Denyce Graves, pop singer Patti LaBelle, and the Cathedral Choir. President Obama gave his only speech of the day at this occasion. The opening remarks by Dean Lloyd were brief, and although Kennedy Center is not architecturally comparable to WNC in structure or beauty, the Cathedral was present nonetheless.

The concert was a celebration in four parts: hope in loss, hope in love, hope in darkness, and hope in peace. Alan Jackson and President Obama presented during “hope in loss.” Patti LaBelle performed in the “hope in love.” The Marine Chamber Orchestra, the WNC Choir, and Alan Jackson (again) performed during the “hope in darkness.” Denyce Grace and the Interfaith Benediction for the World, a group represented by Hindi, Buddhist, Jewish, Muslim, and Christian persons, presented in “hope in peace.” Denyce Graves closed the concert with “Amazing Grace.” The program lasted about one hour. But it is not the concert that speaks for the Cathedral.
The Cathedral spoke quite independently from the program. Inside Kennedy Center hung two giant screens on either side of the stage. The screens showed pictures of the Cathedral focusing on the iconic aspects of the place—the stained-glass windows, the towers and spires, gargoyles, altars, statues, etc. (Appendix P). On the left side of the stage (from facing the stage, or stage right if on the stage) sat the fallen angel from the earthquake (Appendix Q). The Cathedral choir sat behind and above (to give a layered appearance) the Marine Chamber Orchestra; and above the Cathedral choir were three immense photos of the Cathedral organ pipes extending the length of the stage. The lighting on the stage was tinted blue with star-bursts of light coming from behind the Marine Orchestra giving the appearance and aesthetic feel of being in the Cathedral and touched by beams from heaven. If the audience couldn’t go to the Cathedral, the Cathedral was obliged to come to the audience. Even though the only personages from the Cathedral were the dean and choir, it was obvious that their presence was secondary to the transfigured presence of the Cathedral. All that was required was one angel, two giant screens showing iconic pictures of the Cathedral, and three backdrop pictures of organ pipes.

Dean Lloyd commented in the fourth sermon given at Hebrew Congregation that although he embraced the love shown by their Jewish friends, he missed preaching at the Cathedral. He reflected in the conclusion that no matter how much he missed working at “one of the most beautiful places on earth,” he realized that WNC is more than the stones of which it is built. It is also a place of grace and of mission and it is those qualities that define WNC.
9.2 Just the Beginning: Respice, Aspice, Prospice

Over the years WNC has tried its best to be a national cathedral even though there was no precedent model on which to form its identity. The only model it consistently named was Westminster Abbey and even then the term was always set apart in apostrophes and preceded with the obvious difference—“America’s Westminster Abbey.” After its centennial celebration, WNC staff realized that in actuality, the Cathedral of Washington subsumes the roles of three cathedrals of England—Westminster, St. Paul’s, and Canterbury. Sadly, even though the invitation for the nation’s leaders is always extended for WNC as their final resting place, only one president has accepted that invitation. Still, there are a fair number of national heroes, artists, and friends that lie comfortably in the Cathedral. Chapter 7.2 showed that the Cathedral served remarkably well for the state funeral services for Presidents Reagan and Ford. Perhaps due to the advent of televising these events, Americans have become familiar and comfortable with the Cathedral in this role.

The essential role of a national temple for the funerals of national heroes is to bring glory to those who have served the nation’s ideals. Public ceremony does not necessarily require religious service, however. Yet, the memorials at WNC for Reagan and Ford showed the general acceptance of the religious aspects of the two state funerals. The funeral service for astronaut Neil Armstrong that occurred in late September 2012 reveals that no rhetoric about the religiosity of the service was questioned, nor was the place. This was verified by Senator Daniel Inouye’s funeral service three months later in December.

---

202 This is the title of the last chapter in A Master Builder: Being the Life and Letters of Henry Yates Satterlee, First Bishop of Washington, by Rt. Rev. Charles Brent (1916). The chapter is a capstone of eulogies praising the brilliance and leadership of Satterlee. The term, “Respice, aspice, prospice,” means to look backward, look around, look forward.

203 For example the day President Kennedy was conferred to Arlington Cemetery.
For so long called “America’s Westminster Abbey,” the Cathedral has matured far beyond that vision. More important than being the burial site for the nation’s heroes and leaders, poets and artists, WNC is seen as the place of memorial for the nation’s heroes and leaders. August 25, 2012, the day the world’s first man to walk on the moon died, tributes focused on Neil Armstrong’s lunar achievement and the modest Midwestern view of himself and life. President Obama released a statement upon Armstrong’s death calling him “among the greatest American heroes—not just of his time, but of all time” (Pasztor, 2012). At least one call for a state funeral was made on behalf of the hero (Allen, 2012), and although declined, Armstrong’s memorial service held at WNC was not his first visit; it was definitely fitting that his contribution to the famous Space Window be revered.

Armstrong’s connection to the Cathedral goes back to the July 21, 1974 Space (Scientists and Technicians) Window dedication. Marking the fifth anniversary of that first lunar landing, the three Apollo 11 crewmen presented the Cathedral a slice of moon rock, about the size of a Kennedy dollar. In the ceremony, Armstrong said, “This fragment of creation from beyond the Earth [is] to be imbedded in the fabric of this house of prayer for all people.” The connection made, it was natural that Armstrong be remembered by WNC. Armstrong’s private funeral service was held in his hometown of Cincinnati, Ohio. Two weeks later, on September 13, fifty years and one day after President Kennedy issued his declaration that “this nation should commit itself to achieving the goal, before this decade is out, of landing a man on the moon and

---

204 Neil Armstrong, Edwin “Buzz” Aldrin, and Michael Collins
returning him safely to Earth,” WNC held a public memorial for Neil Armstrong. The memorial service, called “A Celebration of Life,” was a prayer service that preceded his interment at sea two days later.

The nation then received news of Senator Daniel Inouye’s death on December 17, just three months after saying goodbye to Neil Armstrong. An American hero injured in World War II, Inouye received a Medal of Honor for losing his arm in a battle in Italy. He was the first Japanese-American to serve in Congress, coming to the House the same year Hawaii became a state, in 1958, and was the last remaining member of the Senate to have voted for the 1964 Civil Rights Act, having also served on the Watergate panel and Iran-Contra hearings (Taylor, 2012). Being of Japanese descent during World War II was not easy, and for this reason, Inouye advocated for the underrepresented and marginalized (Hahn, 2012). A lifelong member of the Methodist Church, he served the largest portion of his life in Washington, D.C. Senator Inouye became the 32nd American to lie in state at the Capitol Rotunda (the only place to lie in state as other “lesser” buildings are referred to as lying in repose). The honor of lying in state also afforded Inouye a memorial celebration and thanksgiving for his life at WNC, but not as a state funeral. As President pro tempore, or third-in-line to the presidency, Inouye’s service at WNC included the receiving of his body (in the casket) and the sending, or commendation, of his soul.

The two funerals at WNC occurring so close together reveal the value and use of the Cathedral for those “national purposes” that L’Enfant planned for in his original blueprint for the Federal City. Our tradition of voting in our nation’s leaders in regular pattern allowing for regular change makes a “Westminster-style” cathedral impractical. Besides, the Cathedral does not

---

206President Kennedy made his September 12, 1962 announcement at Rice University in Houston, Texas, although this (Houston) speech came a full year and a half after he made the same declaration to Congress May 25, 1961.
have a cemetery as other American churches might have; it has crypts. Although the Cathedral is the final resting place for several of the nation’s elite and heroic, such as President Wilson and Helen Keller, it has not caught on as the place for burial of presidents, who like to be buried in their home states, most commonly at their designated libraries. If the nation’s leaders and heroes do not want to be buried at WNC, they do seem inclined to be remembered there since the Cathedral does serve as a magnificent setting for public memorials and funerals. Offering itself for over one hundred years, (Bethlehem Chapel has been in continuous daily service since it was finished in 1912), as the nation’s house of prayer for all people, and opening its doors to the major faith traditions, the Cathedral has acted faithfully as a national cathedral for those occasions when the nation has a national need, such as a funeral. Those times it has memorialized national leaders and heroes, however, have always included conferring the soul into God’s keeping.

Comments by media sources show no questions of appropriateness for the Cathedral services for these two national servants. Just as important is the complete lack of commentary by the viewing public questioning the Cathedral as venue for these services. The Cathedral seems to have finally made its case. Comments regarding the services held at WNC were limited to comments about the men. Even the organization, Freedom From Religion Foundation, was quiet about the services. Satterlee, I think, is happy.

9.3 Conclusion

The building of a national cathedral was an expected novelty—expected because the first blueprint plans of the nation’s new capital city included a national church meant to act nondenominationally to pay homage to those times when national discourse in the form of
speeches would be necessary. Its creation was novel because the purposeful building of a na-
tional church in a secular state had no precedent and no defining identity. Satterlee’s concep-
tion of a national church was not so much a reflection of national in the political or governmen-
tal sense; rather, initially, it was national in the religious sense. He meant to create a place
whereby all Protestant religions could find a religious home (Hewlet, 2007, p. 169). His vision
was not realized however, at least not in a Protestant sense. Despite the rise of the Cathedral,
instead of a unification of the various Protestant faiths under one mission vision, there has
been further splintering of traditional denominations and a growth in non-denominational
faiths. As for the Episcopal Church, there are many Episcopalians today who have no idea that
the WNC is an Episcopal Church and there is no general allegiance by the many Episcopal par-
ishes across the nation toward WNC. By the same token, the Episcopal Church resides at the
top of the Protestant hierarchy of faiths, giving it a certain perceived sense of authority as being
the denomination of the nation’s elite. Satterlee, Freeman and Sayre may well have been the
products of the old WASP establishment, members of private country clubs, rubbing elbows
with those listed in the Social Registers of their day, as they themselves were. There is no con-
ceivable way to imagine WNC being built or attaining its present ethos without the power resid-
ing in the nation’s Eastern elites. In 1965, E. D. Baltzell coined the phrase “the protestant es-
tablishment” to describe this specific class of men, the WASP (White Anglo-Saxon Protestant),
who held the reins of power. No sooner did he publish his thesis than the establishment fell to
pessimism and mistrust. We can scoff at past social elites and their visions of Christian and
Protestant superiority, but there is little to argue that WNC has done well to rhetorically con-
struct a national cathedral. The Episcopal Church is, after all, known to be truly American, reasonable, affable, and gentile.

The Cathedral has been successful as “A great church for national purposes,” (Hewlet, 2007, p. 169) as has been evidenced in its use by national functionaries. The national-ness of the Cathedral has, over time, evolved from a national religious cathedral to a cathedral serving national purposes, purposes the Cathedral defined. WNC serves not only for burials and prayer services, it also serves in outreach missionary for the homeless, uneducated, enslaved, downtrodden, silenced, and lost, and for many other social causes. It is home to near constant interfaith dialogue as well as occasional protest and dissent against unjust political actions. Washington Cathedral has imbedded within its fabric, elements defining not only faith in America, but American culture and history. The 2012 midsummer issue of The Cathedral Age included interviews with President Obama and presidential candidate Romney discussing their personal views of faith in America, making the Cathedral a natural and neutral fountain for the religious views of the nation’s leaders. There is, however, the niggling of concern that, as Marcuse discovers, the “objective of tolerance would call for intolerance” since tolerating all creates an intolerance for those who would tolerate less (Marcuse, 1965). It behooves us, then, to question the true motives of any dean or bishop of the Cathedral in their demands for a more tolerant people. At the same time, that questioning does not absolve any of us from the virtue of tolerance. Tolerance is for the heretic; it is for those who would question what the majority deems as truth (Marcuse, 1965). The Cathedral has as its ideal “the American Way,” the freest example of mankind so far lived. Yet, we know, of course, that the American Way has categorically denied freedom to many—Catholics, Jews, Mormons, Native Americans, Negroes, Mexican-
Americans, Irish, Chinese, Muslims, and any other non WASP category that exists in the United States, along with homosexuals, the poor, the homeless, drug addicts, those suffering from mental illnesses, etc. For Marcuse, history corrects the errors—too late for the victims and executioners alike. Yet it is important that all along, even at a snail’s pace, there are those who are willing and, in this example able, to withstand the vicissitudes of society to aim for change, progress, and inclusion. Also important to note is that WNC invites and allows for other voices without affecting its own identity as Christian, Protestant, and Episcopalian. This tension is lived out daily within the Cathedral walls and by Cathedral personnel, thus adding to WNC’s ethos.

At the end of Sayre’s tenure, with Bishop Walker working to revive the building fund for the Cathedral, the PECF was charged with creating yet another capital campaign. In a memorandum of minutes for a June 21, 1978 meeting, Cathedral Canon D. C. Acheson responded to two questions offered by a Mr. Busby: “(1) Is the Cathedral a national cathedral, or is it a cathedral in our nation’s capital? And (2) Is it a function of the Episcopal church? Ecumenical Christianity? Judeo/Christian tradition? Even beyond that?” Canon Acheson curtly replied: “(1) We damn well better be national, if we are going to a national constituency for money. Whether we are, legally speaking, national, I couldn’t care less. We are national in our role. (2) The Cathedral is a function of all of those things listed in your question 2.” He is repulsed by the idea that WNC can be reduced to “a slogan” because a slogan would represent a commercial superficiality. The Cathedral, in its public persona, must be compelling. Acheson seems to

---

207 His name is Dean Acheson, but I do not want to confuse his name with the office of dean of the Cathedral.
209 Memo to Mr. Busby from D.C. Acheson, dtd. 10 July 1978. WNC ChA: j. 104, b. 3, f. 3.
understand the basis of this entire project; the story of WNC is a “living” entity with a national narrative that has been created by the mixing and blending of secular and religious aspects of the American experience; but the totality of who and what the Cathedral is constituted by the embrace of that American experience by a Supreme God. It is as what I stated in the introduction: [WNC] is the composite of many parts linked by many years, brought to light and placed in relation to other composite parts...revealing how WNC is ‘becoming’ in each segment of its generation, including this one. The Cathedral has always responded to the needs of the American world and her people, becoming the national symbol of benevolence in an otherwise chaotic, constantly changing, and often confusing world. It is national because, as Dean Lloyd stated after the earthquake, just as thousands of Americans offered nickels and dimes to get WNC built the first time, thousands of Americans will rebuild the Cathedral once again. It belongs “to the people” who have entrusted the Cathedral with an important role of serving as a national moral compass. This cathedral is not simply a big and beautiful building; it is the embodiment of the moral character of the nation.

Nowhere in the Cathedral’s public rhetoric is there an understanding of the Cathedral as serving civil religious purposes because Cathedral deans and bishops see WNC as serving a truly God-inspired role in the nation. This project shows, however, that the various Cathedral deans, especially those serving during the building phase from 1920-1990, considered the importance of wedding the nation’s cultural icons with biblical icons. The very fact of the national narrative
as a new covenant makes our nation’s history a matter of religion and we cling to that narrative with religious fervor.\textsuperscript{210}

Understanding the rhetorical discourse of WNC is helped by understanding what constitutes the Cathedral, not as a building, but as an entity with a defined ethos. Defining that ethos has been the goal for this project. I wanted to know how it is that this Episcopal Cathedral of St. Peter and St. Paul became the entity that is what is meant by the title of “Washington National Cathedral.” The building is the same, but the entities are not. After the Sunday morning Episcopal service taken directly from the Episcopal Book of Common Prayer, the Cathedral opens its doors to welcome interfaith meetings and lectures. From its inception, the Cathedral Church very quickly moved into its nickname and it is that shortened nickname that has defined the national character of what has become for us the closest example of a national spiritual home for the nation. WNC is even now still “becoming” in a way no other religious entity is attempting, or if attempted, they have not succeeded in the same way with the same results.

On my first scholarly visit to the Cathedral, I met with (then) Vicar Rev. Steve Huber. As illustration for explaining the changing character of WNC, Rev. Huber showed me his business card and explained that the recent sentiment of the Cathedral was to reduce the font of the word “Washington” so that the logo is now written as “WASHINGTON NATIONAL CATHEDRAL” in order to emphasize its national character.\textsuperscript{211} This makes sense now especially after the September 11, 2011 events (even though our meeting was in 2009). Now, “wNC” has demonstra-

\textsuperscript{210} What the Cathedral does may not be civil religion, but the Cathedral as icon for a national moral character may be seen as a civil religious symbol. The best way to picture this is to see the cover of the 2012 midsummer issue of The Cathedral Age (Appendix R).

\textsuperscript{211} See Cathedral website: www.nationalcathedral.org. Note also that even the Cathedral URL erases “Washington.”
ed the ability to transcend its physicality of Washington, D.C. This may not have been the reason for the diminution of the word “Washington,” but it has worked well in the aftermath of the earthquake.

Writing this biography of WNC, showing the rhetorical *chasse* from Cathedral Church of St. Peter and St. Paul to Washington National Cathedral shows that the physical building is not a split personality, but a double personality. The Cathedral of SS. Peter and Paul has always been an Episcopal cathedral, seat of both the Bishop of Washington and the Presiding Bishop. For that purpose, which was not a part of this dissertation, the Cathedral has lived one life. The part that is WNC was formed by constant awareness of and response to the both its location in the nation’s capital and the spiritual needs of the nation’s people—not exclusively for the Episcopal population (which is very small), not exclusively for the Protestant Christian faith, not even for the Christian faithful in general. WNC has shown itself open to all faiths because the American experience is one of pluralism. But even the embrace of pluralism and ecumenism does not set the outer limit of the character of WNC because, if nothing else, the continual “becoming” of WNC presumes a path toward maturation through change. Phronesis, or practical wisdom, is demonstrated through the rhetorical discourse of the various human speakers of the Cathedral. Arête, or virtue, is revealed through its consistent narrative fidelity and probability of American ideals and history associated by and through the Cathedral’s discourse and physical features. Eunoia, or good will, is demonstrated by its near constant willingness to expand, listen, engage, and respect the various faith traditions and peoples that make up moral America. This dissertation has shown that through a rhetorical biography of the constituting of that entity we call WNC, we understand what it is doing up on that hill, why it is there, who it serves,
and how its rhetoric reflects the social, political, and religious contexts of the nation as well as how that rhetoric affects its own growing sense of identity.

The eight divisions of time showed that the cycling of the inward/outward rhetoric not only defined the purpose of a national cathedral; it also served as a means for Cathedral narrative that corresponded with the narratives of the nation at any given time. At the same time, there have been instances when the Cathedral forced national narratives, such as when Sayre was Dean, and pushed certain narratives to the edge, such as when the current dean, Rev. Hall, announced that the Cathedral would allow same-sex weddings. There is every reason to believe that the Cathedral will continue these rhetorical patterns as it continues to “become.”

Washington National Cathedral now stands complete, yet not complete, at the top of Mt. St. Alban hill, floating above the D.C. tree line, overlooking its charge, ever ready to assume its role outside of its smaller parish and diocesan roles as the nation’s cathedral for national purposes. Those purposes have grown far beyond the original ideas of Washington, L’Enfant, and Satterlee. Completely wrapped in the mantle of a “national” narrative that includes George Washington, a house of prayer for all people, and a spiritual home for the nation, WNC constitutes the nation as advocate for social causes, as serving as a national moral conscience, as embracing and caring for the marginalized and forgotten, as calling the nation’s leaders on their immoral stances and actions, as sending the souls of our nation’s leaders and heroes to their just reward, as praying for well-being of the nation and its people, as recording the nation’s culture and history, as keeping its doors and pulpit open to the many different faith traditions found in our nation, and as holding the doors of dialogue open between those differing
faiths so that, hopefully, maybe nine hundred years hence, the Cathedral’s history will show its character to be both everlasting and ever changing.
REFERENCES


ABC/OTUS. (2013, January 19). Religious tensions play out in inaugural. Retrieved January 19, 2013, from Yahoo! News: http://news.yahoo.com/religious-tensions-play-inaugural-173734945.html;_ylt=Au6_Gr5XstFGIDFVZWQrCaptchaCfFi;_ylu=X3oDMTNmMzNnZHJqBG1pdAMEcGtnAzLiZTQxZWE4LTZhNzItMzk5Zi1hMjTzjLTFrMDkzMGYyZmU0MwRwb3MDMQRzZWMDbG5fUmVsaWdpb25fZ2FsBHlcNnNTIzNzNMC02MjYwLTEzZTIo


F1D3


Chane, J. (2009, November 16). A Christian case for same-sex marriage. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved February 19, 2013, from I have been addressing the sound theological foundation for a new religious understanding of marriage, because it disturbs me greatly to see opposition to marriage for same-sex couples portrayed as the only genuinely religious or Christian position. I am


http://www.nationalcathedral.org/learn/lectureTexts/MED-42VRV-L0000N.shtml

Chap. 254--An act to incorporate the order of Jamestown, 1607. (1901). Retrieved March 20, 2013, from Acts and Joint Resolutions passed by the General Assembly of the State of Virginia during the extra session of 1901:
http://books.google.com/books?id=FbxOAQAAIAAJ&pg=PA285&lpg=PA285&dq=%22order+of+Jamestown%22+episcopal&source=bl&ots=u1YsEiQsGs&sig=D_616DmNik-HfalArLSUn1UhDZI&hl=en&sa=X&ei=xAlTUaTJJJae40QGrxoGADg&ved=0CDQQ6AEwAQ#v=onepage&q=%22order%20of%20Jamestown%22%2


http://www.dioceseny.org/pages/231-concerning-funerals


Freeman, J. E. (1943). Washington Cathedral and the cause of unity: Christian unity indispensable. The Cathedral Age, 18(Spring), 12-13, 34.


McAllen, R. S. (1900). *The devil in robes...or...the sin of priests: The gory hand of Catholicism stayed*. St. Louis, MO: Continental Bible House.


President attends Easter services. (1933, April 17). *New York Times*, p. 3.


Shrine is planned to honor war dead. (1946, April 14). *New York Times*, p. 7.


The order of Jamestown, 1607. (1904). Retrieved March 20, 2013, from The Churchman:
http://books.google.com/books?id=FbxOAQAIAAAJ&pg=PA285&lpg=PA285&dq=%22order+of+Jamestown%22+episcopal&source=bl&ots=u1YsEiQsGs&sig=D_616DmNik-HfalArLS1u1hDZI&hl=en&sa=X&ei=xAlTUaTJJae40QGrxoGADg&ved=0CDQQ6AEwAQ#v=onepage&q=%22order%20of%20Jamestown%22

http://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/plocov.asp


www.beliefnet.com/resourcelib/docs/97/Letter_from_George_Washington_to_the_Roman_Catholics_in_the_U_1.html

http://www.ourdocuments.gov/print_friendly.php?page=transcript&doc=15&title=Transcript+of+President+George+Washington%27s+Farewell+Address+%281796%29


http://ehis.ebscohost.com.ezproxy.gsu.edu/eds/detail?vid=8&sid=a1557e41-6d8d-49f0-a6ab-21a3216742d5@sessionmgr115&hid=116&bdata=JnNpdGU9ZWRzLWxpdmU=#db=a9h&AN=53518026


Appendix A: L’Enfant’s Plan for the Federal City

Appendix B: Congressional Charter establishing the Protestant Episcopal Foundation

[Public—No. 14.]

An act to incorporate the Protestant Episcopal Cathedral Foundation of the District of Columbia.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That William Paret, John S. B. Hodges, William Keyser, of Maryland; Melville W. Fuller, Walter S. Cox, George William Douglas, Randolph H. McKim, Thomas Lincoln Casey, John G. Parke, John M. Wilson, Henry E. Pelley, John A. Kasson, Charles C. Glover, George Truesdell, Edward J. Stelwagen, Alexander T. Britton, Calderon Carisle, Henry E. Davis, Theodore W. Noyes, of the District of Columbia; Levi P. Morton, William C. Whitney, of New York; George W. Childs, Brinton Coxe, of Pennsylvania; John S. Lindsay, of Massachusetts; Marshall Field, of Illinois; George F. Edmunds, of Vermont; George W. Curtis Lee, of Virginia, their associates and successors, are hereby constituted a body politic and corporate by the name of the Protestant Episcopal Cathedral Foundation of the District of Columbia, with power to sue and be sued, plead and be impleaded, and have perpetual succession; to acquire, take by devise, bequest, or otherwise, hold, purchase, encumber, and convey such real and personal estate as shall be required for the purposes of its incorporation; to make and use a common seal, and the same to alter at pleasure; to choose a board of trustees consisting of not more than fifteen, of whom five shall constitute a quorum to do business, and which board shall be authorized to fill any vacancies in their number; to appoint such officers and agents as the business of the corporation shall require, and to make by-laws for the accomplishment of its purposes, for the management of its property, and for the regulation of its affairs: Provided, however, That bishop of the diocese of the Protestant Episcopal Church of the United States of America of which the District of Columbia shall or may form the whole or a part shall be ex officio one of said trustees and shall be chairman thereof: And further provided, That no part of the property of said corporation shall be aliened or encumbered without the written concurrence of the said bishop of the diocese aforesaid. Said corporation is hereby empowered to establish and maintain within the District of Columbia a cathedral and institutions of learning for the promotion of religion and education and charity. The said corporation shall have power to grant and confer diplomas and the usual college and university degrees and honorary degrees, and also such other powers as may be necessary fully to carry out and execute the general purposes of the said corporation as herein appearing.

Sect. 2. This act may be amended or repealed at any time by the Congress in its pleasure.

Approved, January 6, 1893.
Appendix C: The Peace Cross

Photo taken by myself on 7 February 2012. The building behind the Peace Cross is the Bishop’s House.
Appendix D: Satterlee’s sermon, Trinity Church, January 29, 1900

“For National Cathedral: Bishop Satterlee Pleads for its Establishment in Washington,”


Declares that Government will be asked no favors—An influence against corruption.

Bishop Satterlee of Washington preached in Trinity Church yesterday morning in support of his plea for the establishment of a National cathedral in the capital.

“As the Roman Catholics,” he said, “have established great Catholic universities, the Methodists Methodist universities, and the Baptists Columbian University, the Episcopal Church, the last in the fold, moves toward the establishment of a National cathedral in the National capital as a witness before the whole country of Christian unity with an Anglican basis.

“This is no new idea. Major Lenfant (sic) the architect for Gen. Washington, projected in laying out the Federal city a State church, to belong to no denomination. The Patent Office stands on the site he selected for such a church. The church could never be built in a country where Church and States are not one and the sects are so divided. The Episcopal cathedral was thought of twenty-five years ago, and about ten years later a charter was granted and land bought. It proved inadequate for a building to stand for centuries, with ever growing work, and the cathedral trustees purchased Mount St. Albans, one of the most commanding sites in the whole District of Columbia. The first cathedral service was that of the unveiling of the Peace Cross at the termination of the Spanish-American war, and on that site to-day, beside the little free church of St. Albans, are the Peace Cross and the grave of the Rev. Dr. Claggett, the first Bishop of any branch of the Christian Church ever consecrated on American soil.”
Bishop Satterlee went on to say that the Episcopal Church is peculiarly fitted to build a National cathedral because it contains in itself Protestant and Catholic tendencies, and is, he asserted, the lineal descendent and successor of the primitive church as it was in the first four centuries before Church and State were ever heard of and before “the medieval novelties of Roman Catholicism” had appeared.

“It stands,” he said, “for the principle of irrevocable separation of Church and State, as it did in the earlier days and for primitive Christian worship in a language understood by the people. The Church, to be free, as the ancient Apostolic work was, must be untrammeled herself by any political influence.

“The national cathedral will have no favors to ask or receive from the Government, no proselytizing work to do. The lives of her officers will be an epistle seen and read of all men. It will constitute a tremendous moral and spiritual power. The cathedral preachers from a free pulpit of a free church in a free state can boldly rebuke vice and political corruption and hold up the mirror of Christ’s pure Gospel to those who neglect the responsibility their country has laid upon them or upon those who forget that public office is a public trust.”

Bishop Satterlee spoke of the work necessary before the cathedral can be an accomplished fact with all the pomp and power needed for the proper carrying out of its projected influence, and then made an appeal for aid for the school started in connection with the projected cathedral.

“Mrs. Phoebe A. Hearst,” he continued, “has generously given a building for a cathedral school for girls, in which the highest and best kind of education is to be afforded. This school is complete, and the school will be opened in the Autumn, but before that is done there is a debt
of $150,000 upon the cathedral land that should be cleared off. We hope that the whole amount will be raised this Winter."

Bishop Satterlee told of many women who had told him they are Roman Catholics because of the influences of the convent schools at which they were educated, and said that when the Episcopal school is working he hoped never again to hear such a statement from a woman whose family had been confirmed in the Episcopal Church.

Bishop Satterlee purposes delivering an address in all the cities of the Union in furtherance of the plan of the establishment of the cathedral.
Appendix E: Trowel used to break Cathedral ground

Photo taken by myself on 7 February 2013. The small inscription by the lower left trowel tip says, “This silver trowel was used to set both the foundation stone and the last finial.”
Appendix F: Cathedral Floor Plan
Appendix G: George Washington

Photo taken by me on 7 February 2013.
Appendix H: Statue of Abraham Lincoln

Photo taken by me on 7 February 2013.
Appendix I: Abraham Lincoln kneeling

Photo taken by me on 7 February 2013.
Appendix J: The Children’s Chapel

Photo taken by me on 7 February 2013.
Appendix K: Military Triptych

Photo of triptych found on p. 24 in the Easter, 1945 *The Cathedral Age.*
Appendix L: Invasion Day Message by The Right Reverend Angus Dun, Bishop of Washington

Offered in the Summer 1944 The Cathedral Age, vol. XIX, no. 2, p. 3.

The day for which we have been waiting in fear and hope has come. We are like those who stand outside the door when one greatly loved passes into the crisis of a dread disease. We listen for the least whisper of news. For we know that not one life is at stake, but the lives and fortunes of multitudes we cannot number. We remember before God our sons and brothers and friends who press forward onto the shores of France, who are crowded into thousands of ships, who battle in the air above their struggling comrades below. We remember too the people who wait in tense expectation for their day of deliverance.

Men and women of all faiths, yes, men and women of little faith, must cry out today to the God they have known or to the God they long to believe in at such a times. We ask for victory, the triumph of good over evil, of freedom over slaver, of decency over brutality, and of order over chaos.

In final victory we have sure confidence, for God has put into our hands a measure of power that must prevail. May God steady us in these days to come and keep us faithful to the work before us, that the sacrifice of our brothers may not be in vain. May He give to us and to all peoples clear vision and the will for just and godly peace.
Appendix M.1: The War Memorial Chapel

Photo taken by me on 7 February 2013.
Appendix M.2: The Pentagon Cross

Photo taken by me on 7 February 2013. Located in the War Memorial Chapel.
Appendix N: British connection at the dedication ceremony of the War Memorial Chapel in 1946.

Photo taken by me on 7 February 2013.
Dear friends of the Cathedral,

I am writing to announce that, effective immediately, same-sex weddings may be celebrated at Washington National Cathedral, which has a long history of advancing equality for people of all faiths and perspectives. The Cathedral is called to serve as a gathering place for the nation in times of significance, but it is also rooted in its role as the most visible faith community within the Episcopal Church. For more than 30 years, the Episcopal Church has prayed and studied to discern the evidence of God’s blessing in the lives of same-sex couples. It is now only fitting that the National Cathedral follow suit. We enthusiastically affirm each person as a beloved child of God—and doing so means including the full participation of gays and lesbians in the life of this spiritual home for the nation.

Consistent with the canons of the Episcopal Church, the Cathedral will begin celebrating same-sex marriage ceremonies using a rite adapted from an existing blessing ceremony approved in August 2012 by the Church at its General Convention. That approval allowed for the bishops who oversee each diocese within the Church to decide whether
or not to allow the rite’s use or to allow celebration of same-sex marriage. In light of the legality of civil marriage for same-sex couples in the District of Columbia and Maryland, Bishop Mariann Budde announced last month that the diocese would now allow this expansion of the sacrament, which then led to my decision for the Cathedral’s adaptation of the same-sex rite.

In my 35 years of ordained ministry, some of the most personally inspiring work I have witnessed has been among gay and lesbian communities where I have served. I consider it a great honor to lead this Cathedral as it takes another historic step toward greater equality—and I am pleased that this step follows the results made clear in this past November’s election, when three states voted to allow same-sex marriage.

Matters of human sexual identity and questions about the Church’s role in blessing lifelong, committed relationships between its members are serious issues around which feelings run high and people of good will can often disagree. It is my hope and prayer that, if all of us open ourselves to the fullness and diversity of our nation’s many voices, we will learn to walk together in a new way as we listen for God’s call to us to be faithful to each other and to God.

**I must also take this opportunity to stress that the same guidelines for couples eligible to be married at the Cathedral stay in effect.** All weddings at the Cathedral are conducted as Christian marriages in which the couple commits to lifelong faithfulness, love, forbearance, and mutual comfort. At least one person in the couple, therefore, must have been baptized. Only couples directly affiliated with the life of the Cathedral—as active, contributing members of the congregation; as alumni or alumnae
of the Cathedral schools; as individuals who have made significant volunteer or donor contributions over a period of time; or those judged to have played an exceptional role in the life of the nation—are eligible to be married at the Cathedral.

The Episcopal Church has shown faithfulness and courage in the long discernment process that led to the development and approval of this rite. The Diocese of Washington has similarly been a leader in the implementation of marriage equality. I have shared this decision with the Chapter and staff prior to this announcement, and I am proud that Washington National Cathedral will be among the first Episcopal institutions to adopt and implement a rite that will enable our faithful LGBT members to share in the sacramental blessings of Christian marriage.

Gary Hall

Dean
Appendix P: A Call to Compassion *Concert for Hope* on 9/11/11 at Kennedy Center

Photo taken from WNC website:
http://nationalcathedral.org/galleries/20110911PM/20110911_911_024.jpg
Appendix Q: Fallen angel at *Concert for Hope*

Photo taken from WNC website: Cathedral Dean Samuel Lloyd, III
http://nationalcathedral.org/galleries/20110911PM/20110911_911_044.jpg
Appendix R: 2012 Cathedral Age cover